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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

MUSICAL ASSOCIATION

FOR THE INVESTIGATION AND

DISCUSSION OF SUBJECTS CONNECTED WITH THE

ART AND SCIENCE OF MUSIC.

FOUNDED MAY 29, 1874.

SEVENTH SESSION, 1880-1.

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

"An Inquiry into the Origin and Growth of Certain Musical Idioms and Expressions." By E. H. Turpin, Esq. 1

"A Neglected Musical Benefactor." By William H. Cummings, Esq. 19

"A Few Words about Handel." By William H. Cummings, Esq. 29

"The Principles of Musical Criticism." By John Stainer, Esq., M.A., Mus. Doc. 35

"On Beauty of Touch and Tone: an Inquiry into the Physiological and Mechanical Principles involved in their Cultivation." By A. Orlando Steed, Esq. 53

"Introductory to the Study of Wagner's Comic Opera, 'Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg.'" By C. A. Barry, Esq., M.A. 75

"The Causes of the Rise in Orchestral Pitch." By Dr. W. H. Stone, M A., F.R.C.P. 99

"On Some of the Underlying Principles of Structure in Musical Composition." By H. C. Banister, Esq. 117

"A Concise View of the Law of Copyright as Affecting Composers of Music." By F. Meadows White, Esq., Q.C. . . 135

November 1, 1880.

JOHN STAINER, Esq., M.A., Mus. Doc.,

Vice-President, in the Chair.

AN INQUIRY INTO THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF CERTAIN MUSICAL IDIOMS AND EXPRESSIONS.

By E. H. Turpin, Esq.

The title of my paper expresses the direction rather than the purpose of the observations I am indulgently permitted to offer for your consideration this evening. My proposition may be described as two-fold; in the first place I shall endeavour to show that original and soul-stirring music is not necessarily produced by the studied avoidance of accepted idioms, but rather by the skilful use of figures which have become recognised forms of the language of music; and in the second place it is my desire to protest that, accepting music as a modern art, we are too apt, in contemplating its comparatively recent achievements, to neglect the study of its primary impulses, which, having moved the hearts of all men in all ages, will ever remain the source of all that is true and strong.

Let me at once plead, that I have no wish to look back in an antiquarian spirit, but simply from the desire to note the character and value of such musical idioms and expressions as have not only stood the test of time, but seem likely to retain their places in the future history of the art. To my mind it is unfortunate that we are so apt to think slightingly of the earlier phases of the art.

It is doubtless true that, in its present advanced condition, music retains within its multitudinous resources all that is of value from past times; the test of such value being indeed the very continued existence of such conserved idioms.

As in all other inventive processes, a knowledge of the origin and growth of the different musical appliances must be of use to the composer. The value of such appliances and musical idioms is greater in proportion as they are natural and obvious, rather than in accordance with their comparative abstruseness and rarity.

As the mechanic values such primary inventions as the screw and the wheel; as the poet finds depth and power in the familiar idioms of a language—for the use of such powers is greater to-day than yesterday, and will be still greater to-morrow—so the musician knows best how to go straight to our hearts when he has learnt to handle with truth and judgment the progressions and inventions already in existence.

Music, the one universal tone-language and the deepest and purest of all the powers of communication between mind and mind, shares with speech the constraining condition of being unable to transfer absolutely and instantaneously individual thought and feeling, though possessing the power of sufficiently indicating, and preparing the minds of listeners for the reception of, any given thought or feeling. In other words, the arts appealing through the ear, while possessing perhaps greater powers of suggestion and reflection than the sister arts appealing through the eye, have to penetrate and enforce through processes of evolution, reiteration, development and measured proportions, affecting the mind of the listener by the action of the memory, which the writer or composer must know how to command. Thus accepted idioms or successions of sounds have the same value to both poet and musician. The writer and the composer have therefore alike to prepare for and to enforce thought and feeling chiefly through sounds already connected and made more or less familiar by the crystallised instincts of myriads of minds. For the composer to possess, if such a supposition were possible, the power of employing only tone progressions, original in the sense of being entirely peculiar to himself, the parallelism in the use of words could only be imagined in the case of a man enjoying all to himself a language without grammatical forms, and unknown to all the rest of mankind.

The position of either the writer of words or the composer involves therefore two responsibilities: the possession of definite thought based upon some state of feeling common to all, and the judicious and, for the sake of power and clearness of expression, sufficiently large employment of accepted idioms. The musician, however, has exceptional difficulties: he deals with a language which is set apart, and not constantly used in the affairs of daily life. So, to enable him to attain ready and familiar power of his special language, the composer must not only write with well-concentrated thoughts, but he must write constantly and write much. Dr. Hullah has, if I remember aright, pointed in the direction I have just indicated, in certain valuable sentences addressed to the students of musical history anent the work of the greater masters of the art. The composer who would be true and strong must, it may be assumed I believe, learn to properly assess and judiciously employ that which has stood the test of time, to accept frankly

such advances upon acknowledged idioms as he may gather from the present, to regard with not ungenerous caution such theories and progressions as are somewhat presumptuously proclaimed to be of the future, and to incessantly think and write, in order that his musical mind may be ever active, nervous and prompt.

Music, though a language set apart, is not an isolated art. The man who first raised and lowered his voice in speech to intensify the thoughts and feelings he sought to express, indicated the formation of that tone-power which was ultimately, as Professor Macfarren has recently so acutely remarked, to transcend all language in the very creation of given feelings themselves.

To my mind, one of the first tasks of the composer, is seriously to contemplate that action which, centring the voice on some medium tone in speech, provides a point of departure for the expression of every type of feeling, by elevation and depression. This important faculty has lost none of its power in music, notwithstanding the extension of compass, which has grown up chiefly by the development of instrumental music. The modern scheme of assimilated diatonic scales, based primarily upon the strata of tonic harmonies, has, supported by the modern mediums of modulation, opened out to the composer a comprehensive field of perfectly proportioned and equally balanced tone quantities, with, to the modern composer, the indispensable combination of the diatonic and chromatic genera.

The placing of the diatonic scale system on the true harmonic basis has not interfered with the gravitation of tune towards a pivot centre-note, as still technically expressed in melody, by the adoption of authentic and plagal outlines, and by the answers to fugue subjects requiring tonal answers.

It seems to me that the musical student would gain strength and melodic character, with a sort of concentrated expressive power, by studying carefully the different bearings, so to speak, of the ancient scale forms. When a man, no less than Beethoven himself, has shown such instinctive melody action, and adopted, to give one instance, the scale outline and pivot note of the Hypo-Ionian mode, as in the theme of the last movement of the Ninth Symphony, and brought forward the desire to employ practically a variety of scale centres by placing his second subjects in the mediant and sub-mediant, the musical student may surely turn again with advantage to the inspection of the old scale forms, built up as they are upon the natural process of speech, which prompts the rise and fall of the speaker's voice from some medium centre-tone.

Very likely the old scale system took its first principles from the semi-musical expression of poetical accents. Even now we note that the variations of tone employed by an expressive reader or speaker indicate real melody.

When, about 1580, the attempted restoration of Greek art was brought about in Venice, the revival of a Greek tragedy was accompanied by the introduction of a sort of chanted recitation, presumably an early form of melody, which led to the invention or rather adoption of the recitative in modern music. Starting from the slight inflections of the speaking voice, a prevailing characteristic of ancient tune was the generally conjunct nature of the intervals employed.

The giant Beethoven, who gathered up musical forms and idioms with such a strong hand, again instructs us profitably, by the large employment of diatonic conjunct intervals in many of his noblest and albeit most *original* melodies. Similar testimony in the same direction can be found in the works of all good masters.

In the early Christian Church, several inflections came into general use for the musical punctuation of sentences, as the medium accent falling a minor third, the grave falling a fifth, and the acute rising a minor third. The comparatively early ornamentation of the grave accent, used to note a point of termination, by the addition of a half-turn, is a matter of interest, as an early use of a defined musical grace, and one, too, which has had so large a use in contrapuntal cadence points. The acute accent, used to the word "Amen," was the origin of the cadence of dominant and tonic harmonies, employed later on in the English Protestant Church, when the melody was, for harmonic, and possibly melodic reasons, altered from the ascent from the sub-mediant to key-note to the rise from leading-note; although the cadence formed by the ascent of a semitone has still greater claims to antiquity than the date of the Reformation affords.

It is impossible now to realise the ancient power of the early and simple melodic idioms. There can be little doubt but that these same progressions, finding a resting-place in the Church, have been brought down to us, and perpetuated as the purest source of tune. The space of a volume would not suffice to point out the universality of the germinating power of the early inflections and idioms. It is curious and interesting to note that the prevailing inflections of the early Christian Church, consisting of minor thirds and fifths, show by prescience the relationship between melody and harmony. It is also of some interest to note that the melodic idioms used in bell-ringing, and even now moving hearts to many tender associations, are nearly all, if not all, very ancient, some being found in the responses of an old Litany of the Saints. Perhaps in picturesque old cities the bells took up the Litany strains as they were being sung in the religious processions in the streets.

Again, as evidence of harmonic prescience in tune, let me quote the quaint notes which so touched the heart of the

Catholic Mozart, still used as the chant for the words of the preface or commencement of the canon of the Mass, and immediately preceding the Sanctus. These sentences are formed from the notes of the third and fourth octaves of the harmonic range, and the passages may consequently be played upon the open sounds of the horn or trumpet. The very mention of these instruments will recall many sonorous, noble sentences which, though so familiar and immutable, can never be vulgarised or lose their sterling value.

As from their intimate connection with poetry, accents, and regulated physical action, as dancing, we may conclude that the ancient musical idioms were strengthened by being laid out in rhythmical divisions more or less definite. In the first musical epoch of the Christian Church, probably from the want of a hymnology with measured lines for the development of musical accent and rhythm, musical progressions and phrases were handed on devoid of, or deprived of, those essential elements of clearness and purpose in tone sentences, rhythmical accents, and divisions. Consequently, to those who care not to examine music lacking such important features, the Plain-Song of the Church presents little character or charm. Even so generous a thinker as Mendelssohn, though employing incessantly melodic figures of Plain-Song if not of a still more remote origin, could not be induced to regard Plain-Song with any favour. Yet many of Mendelssohn's melodies and, perhaps still more, Gounod's tunes owe much of their character to the constant employment of antique progressions.

Some indication of the instinctive approach of harmony may be found in the gradually increasing tendency to employ in the early musical idioms such intervals as denote harmonic sympathy, as thirds and fifths. The interval of the sixth, both major and minor, can be found in use at a comparatively early period, but first used apparently to cover gracefully the rise or fall to a fifth, as G ascending to E and returning to D, and C falling to E to return to F; progressions at once suggestive of related harmonies. The rise of the minor seventh was, somewhat nearer modern times, similarly employed; as G rising to F and returning to E. The expressive interval of the minor sixth, especially as employed in the minor mode rising from the key-note, first used probably in descent, and previously indicated by the intermediate notes being filled in conjunctly, has been effectively employed by composers from about the second half of the sixteenth century. Even the rarely satisfactory intervals of the major seventh and ninth can be noted in instrumental music of the same period.

The characteristic little figure, in modern times nationalised as the Scotch snap, and which, by its indication of thirds, has been shrewdly described as used to enable one performer to

express at times the harmony of a duet, has a respectable antiquity. It appears not only in old Scotch, but also in old Italian melodies between the dates of 1560 and 1730. It is even used in one or two sacred melodies by Pergolesi.

Elsewhere I have endeavoured to show that the leading melodic influences are gravitation, or scale centralisation, evolution, and proportion. It is unnecessary now to dwell longer upon the presence of scale centralisation.

By evolution we obtain in time the power of resemblance, so universal in nature and art, from blades of grass and leaves of trees to the repeated or developed figures and design of the art-worker, whether he appeals to the eye or the ear.

During the Plain-Song epoch evolved idioms, lacking the germinating power of measured accentuation, are obscure, though by no means absent. The adoption of settled time-measurements, and the subsequent rapid development of rhythm, led to the proper appreciation of the power of evolution in melody, a principle very soon advanced to the formation of sequential harmonies.

Such quickened perceptions of the action of evolution probably led the way to growth of imitation in the different strata of the vocal score, and to the complete erection of that sublimated evolution which defies the ravages of time and changes of thought and fashion, and which we generalise under the terms counterpoint, canon, and fugue.

Just as the steps before a great building lead the way to a climax of sight, so the ascending and descending evolution of melodic particles paved the way for the employment of *crescendo* and *diminuendo* effects, and the definite formation of such dramatic forces as the climax, anti-climax, and one of the finest efforts of modern art, the coda.

The employment of tone expressions would, no doubt, long precede the use of their verbal equivalents. The early, deep, and earnest appreciation of the power of scale centralisation, presumably derived from speech, clearly involved the presence of emphatic intensity, and its converse—repose—in cadence forms. Evolution would also lead to continuity, as found in the maintained characteristic action of music intended for the expression of a given type of feeling, or for given purposes. Such continuity, primarily derived from the evolution of the different feet or accent figures, plays an acknowledged part instinctively at a period preceding the formation of measured tunes.

To mention only one form, for the sake of brevity. The well-marked triple impulse, used with such vigour in some of Handel's choruses, as "And the glory of the Lord" and "Fixed in His everlasting seat," and in other works down to our own times, is felt with not inconsiderable force in some Plain-Song specimens, notably in a "Lauda Sion," or Prose

for Corpus Christi Day; and some two or three centuries later we find the same springing vigorous impulse largely used by Palestrina, Anerio, and others of the Italian-Spanish school. Our own composers of the Restoration period again helped forward the same idiom. Similarly, the tender, graceful action of triple divisions finds expression in Palestrina's motett, "Adoremus," to name only one instance.

The persistent use, too, of dotted notes to give sharpness and brightness of accent, will be found to extend back to the middle of the sixteenth century in instrumental music, though this figure has no place in vocal music then, or indeed for some time to come.

One little melodic figure must not be overlooked, the progression expressed by the notes G, A, C. Probably originally derived from the scale form distinguished as the pentatonic, the use of which is the chief characteristic of Scotch national melodies, this marked figure forms the intonation or stepping-notes to the dominant or centre note of several of the Church modes. As an initial figure it retains its place in large numbers of contrapuntal and fugal subjects through the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, to serve in the same sense at the commencement of the fugal theme in Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony, and to be the most characteristic initial of Mendelssohn's music, as in the last movement of the Scotch Symphony.

Another intonation, of less character and power, from the old Church modes—the ascent of two full tones, as C, D, E—has also done duty extensively for many generations as a melodic, contrapuntal, aud fugal initial.

Possibly the most important and unchangeable of musical idioms are the cadence forms, viewed either from the melody or harmony points of sight.

The hyper, or authentic versions of the modes, have the final note as the lower external, the next note above being a full tone above the final. The scales thus formed brought into existence the most natural of all cadences—the fall from supertonic to tonic. Two of the hypo, or plagal versions, have semitones at the lower extremities of the scales so rendered. Still I imagine that the ascending cadence form, from leading-note to key-note, would most naturally arise from the modes in which a semitone is found under the dominant or centre note.

In "An Essay on the Temple Music of the Jews," by Arthur Bedford, a clerical scholar of considerable sagacity and learning writing at the close of the seventeenth or in one of the earlier years of the succeeding century, an elaborate attempt is made to prove that the eleven Hebrew words prefixed to certain of the Psalms indicate the formation of the chant or mode in the several instances of their employment. In every instance in which the author conjectures he has thus

transcribed the given word musically, the cadence form from leading-note to tonic has a place.

Though rare, to come to more substantial evidence, several old Plain-Song melodies have the cadence in question; possibly, as already suggested, the acute accent or rise of the minor third may have been its origin, the sympathetic rise of the semitone being perhaps accepted as an improvement upon the older inflection, long before the cadence form was fully established in connection with succeeding dominant and tonic harmonies.

The leading-note cadence appears in sacred melodies of the Spanish Jews in use some 350 years ago. Possibly, as we find in the works of the writers of the sixteenth century, the cadence in question may have been frequently formed by the use of an accidental sharp, a process of forming a temporary leading-note very likely employed by an understood tradition before any sign was used to convert the rise of a full-tone to an intensified ascent of a semitone. The formation of this cadence in complete harmony was in common use in the middle of the sixteenth century, formed by the dominant chords five-four and five-three, with or without the contrapuntal grace of a half-turn. It is needless to add that this form of cadence was greatly confirmed by the discovery of the function of the minor seventh and its connection in the chord of the dominant with the leading-note.

One once-favourite modification of the leading-note cadence was produced by combining the supertonic and leading-note in dominant harmony in a melodic figure, thus: D, B, C.

The cadence formed by the dominant 6-4 (as a double suspension substituted for the single suspension of the 5-4) followed by the chord of the dominant seventh does not, it is unnecessary to say, receive the sanction of anything like general use until the very end of the seventeenth century.

The plagal cadence has held its place unchanged for centuries in ecclesiastical and sacred music. The consistent and persistent use of this form in Handel's "Hallelujah" Chorus is a striking lesson as to the value of a well-employed idiom.

In all the cadence forms, whether perfect or imperfect, a sort of confidence is established between composer and performer on the one hand, and the listener on the other, by which musical punctuation is set up and observed.

Something of this confidence exists in the resolution of all dissonant into consonant combinations, which cannot be disturbed, and which therefore places all such harmony progressions in the midst of the necessary and established idioms of the art.

In dramatic music for the most part a tendency to widen out the external points of cadence-forms in dominant harmonies, is worthy of being touched upon. I can express the idea of

this to you by letters representing the descent of the melody in each case: D, C; E, D, C; D, E, C; F, E, C (this involving the chord of the dominant thirteenth); G, C; A, G C (this with chord of dominant ninth).

The ending with the so-called *tierce de Picardie*, prevailing extensively from the end of the fifteenth century, has never attained to the dignity of being accepted as an idiom of all time; its use diminished during the seventeenth, and almost ceased early in the eighteenth century.

The composers writing in the full daylight of the harmonic principles during the past 300 years or more, have shown us that while cadences ending with the first position of the tonic chord are the most satisfactory, those ending on the second of the tonic positions with major thirds have in their repose a sense of affectionate tenderness, and those terminating with the third position of the chord embody in their calmness and strength, feelings of firm faith and trust; a practical expression of the sentiment and strength respectively imparted to the final chord by its third and fifth.

The faculty of reiteration, so powerful an engine in the hands of some modern composers, notably Beethoven, is by no means a modern invention, for we find it employed with remarkable boldness and skill in Dr. John Bull's "Lessons for the Virginals;" though not largely used during the transition period of the succeeding epoch.

The artificial activity, and at times impulsive passion, gained by the use of broken harmonies is an expression the origin of which may be fairly assigned to the transition period just alluded to.

It is curious to note that while the speed at which chord roots can be realised, and pace at which the pulsation beat travels, do not greatly change, as in obedience to some apparently universal law which regulates the receptive power of the mind in accordance with the breadth and depth of the impressions presented, all the great transition periods of the art have been characterised by a change in the notation as regards time-measurements. Thus the black, solid-looking notes of the Plain-Song period were succeeded by open breves, semibreves, and minims of the contrapuntal epoch; these being followed by the general use in the seventeenth century and onwards, of the black crotchets and notes of smaller value; and the revived interest in church music has led to the return of certain *alla breve* measures. So the pulsation beat, the real test and centre of all time measurements, has been variously expressed by the breve of Plain-Chant, the minim, the crotchet, and to some extent by the quaver, without much deviation in its pace; even the different rates of what may almost be called artificial speed, from adagio to presto, are only to be successfully employed by the composer who knows

how to respect the not-to-be-disturbed procession of harmonic roots, and the somewhat more active ordinary pulsations.

Though the perpendicular method of distributing harmonic combinations is regarded as comparatively modern, and its employment opened out the way to a more complete expression of picturesque and dramatic impulses, many such effects had been anticipated during the period when the horizontal harmony we distinguish as counterpoint hardly permitted such tone blows and touches, as now express surprise, fear, doubt, and other mental phenomena. Nevertheless, we find that Palestrina, by the employment of long-drawn harmonies, succeeded, in his setting of that portion of the Roman Office for Good Friday known as the "Reproaches," in creating in music the temperament of long-suffering patience.

At the same period, a setting of the "Passion" by Vittoria, in which different singers sustain in Plain-Song the different characters including the Evangelist as historian and the choir representing the people, displays such sharply defined exclamatory idioms of harmony, as we find in Bach's setting later, to such cries as "Barabbas!" and "Crucify Him!"

The conjunction of the diatonic and chromatic genera in the modern scale system, and a more thorough penetration into the depths of harmony, naturally led to large additions being made to the comparatively limited harmonic resources of the earlier writers, and to the formation of a new dogma, vital to the interests of dramatic expressions, the creation of given types of feeling by a larger use of the upper harmonic strata, by augmented and diminished chords, and by discords formed of extended, contracted, or displaced harmonic elements.

The chord of the minor ninth, especially when used without the root, affords an instance of such an accepted expression of harmony, carrying a sense of doubt and painful uncertainty which—when the root is added, producing a sharp collision between the foundation tone and the ninth itself—is intensified into a sensation of acute agony. The major ninth, again, has less of doubt and pain in its suspense, as its root, even when not sounded, is more palpable than that of the minor ninth. The character of the last-named chord still retains its pungency, though the combination has been very largely employed for dramatic purposes, since the early part of the eighteenth century, and its occasional use may be traced through the music of Bach and others to about 1670; it was used by Dr. Blow, for instance, and frequently by Henry Purcell.

The chord of the thirteenth, whether major or minor, probably found favour before that of the eleventh. In the harpsichord music, and in the last movements of the Overture to Purcell's "Bonduca," written in the last year of his life, there are expressive instances of the first inversion of the chord of the minor thirteenth.

Sir F. A. Gore Ouseley, you will all remember, instances the keenly expressive appearance of the last inversion of the German version of the chord of the extreme sixth, in Weldon's anthem "Hear my crying." The first inversion of the same form of the chord of the extreme sixth of E flat appears in Bach's Organ Fantasia in G minor, over the dominant pedal D. This passage must have been written about the same time as Weldon's anthem, between 1720 and 1730. Even composers writing in the present epoch show a singular reluctance to the employment of the inversions of the so-called German form of the chord of the extreme sixth, and their first use must have involved the exercise of exceptionally strong feelings and courage.

A chromatic alteration of the second inversions of the dominant chords 6-3, 6-4-3, and that of the minor ninth, no doubt was the origin of the three versions of the chord of the extreme sixth; still, as this alteration affected the fifth from the root, and so detracted from the frank nervous sound of the original source of the harmony, the several versions of the chords of the augmented sixth must remain chords of luxury rather than of general service. No versions of the harmony just named came into use before the latter end of the seventeenth century.

Many of the most characteristic chords appear first experimentally or timidly, or are first suggested in grace or leaning-notes. Thus the successive harmonies 6-4 and 5-3, and the chord of the thirteenth, whether major or minor, are alike first intimated in instrumental music early in the sixteenth century, by the use of the third of the scale as an *appoggiatura* preceding the third position of the dominant 5-3, in the formation of a perfect cadence.

The retardation of the major seventh—afterwards enlarged upon by the retention of the entire chord of the dominant seventh over a tonic pedal—a progression somewhat esteemed, chiefly in instrumental music about the Bach period, as a pungent and expressive cadence form, finds little favour now.

The riches of harmony, based upon Nature's own truths, are however but little liable to the variableness of taste or fashion; and to the end of time the simple triad will remain the most precious of tone combinations, all other chords being apparently destined to be valued in proportion to the nearness of their elements to, and not because of the remoteness of their sounds from, their respective foundation-tones.

Professor Macfarren forcibly pointed out to you, in the remarks succeeding Mr. C. E. Stephens's very able paper on "Form," read before you last year, that the natural law of harmonics was the basis upon which the principles of form rested. The truth of this observation is seen conversely in the difficulty and amount of preparation necessary to the satisfactory intro-

duction of a theme in any key having no direct bearing upon the scale of the piece. Rays of light from this truth illumine every design in music, from the simplest melody to the most complex fugue or towering symphony. Still, I will venture to plead that there are many new and unexplored fields for constructors of form plans, without any violation of the principle just enunciated. A familiar acquaintance with the outlines and bearings of the old modes would, in this direction, be more profitable than any undirected strivings after new constructive mediums.

It would seem probable that the principles of form intimated in fragments of Plain-Song, fostered in the refrains of early songs and dances, were, though hidden, actually growing and gaining strength during the contrapuntal period.

The logical progression of the canon ultimately developed the fugue, and in the fugal exposition we see the presentation of a theme for development, in the stretto we find its intensified recapitulation, and in its pedal points that facing homewards which is the function of the modern coda. Perhaps even more technically, the repeated presentation of a fugue subject owes its moving spring to the same faculty which brought the modern rondo into existence.

Without entering upon the wide expanse involved in a consideration of the tone-colour idioms, I will ask you to let me allude to the existence of a theory of appropriateness of compass, a sort of musical principle of gender, corresponding with the division of voices into distinct departments. The principle is not new, being to some extent involved in the ancient plan of grouping instruments into sets, for the expression of different types of ideas. Still, the theory seems to be distinct from that of tone-colour appropriateness, which assigns given tone qualities to given scenes and phases of life.

A simple and rather early expression of the principle from the modern point of sight is found in the repetitions in Handel's Dead March in "Saul," in which the trombones indicate the sorrow of strong men, while the flutes touch us as with the grief of weeping women. The scores of Beethoven show a large development of this theory, which give feminine tones to the soprano medium, masculine thoughts to the tenor compass, and angelic or fairy-like impulses to the upper registers of violins and flutes: recently the dark places under the earth have their typical orchestral atmosphere in the tones of the deeper wind-instruments. The scores of Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Night's Dream" and Wagner's operas afford admirable expressions of this theory of tone locality.

A few words should be said in favour of the retention of the transposition mechanism of the transposing orchestral instruments; for the plan of writing for such instruments the notes as sounded would disastrously remove from the composer's

sight and hand not only the awkward corners of construction and difficult points of execution, but would also, in such obscuration of mechanism, partially hide from the writer effective sounds and peculiar idioms belonging to the several instruments; points which by right should be under the composer's full control, and should not be handed over to the player's judgment or convenience.

With all the vast appliances of modern music, the greatest effects are still wrought by the simplest means, and no chromatic effort has yet equalled the sublime force of the commonest diatonic progressions. We might in our harmonies indeed gain something by a more frequent attention to the consolidation of chords in the way of always, or nearly always, securing the presence of the fifth, as did the old masters.

The establishment of accepted idioms and expressions is really helpful, and not detrimental, to the production of strong and original thought. If idiomatic expressions are essential to verbal language, it is not going too far to say they are quite as necessary and indispensable to the communicative power of that tone-language which is set apart from the ordinary requirements of the verbal language, and consequently is removed into another atmosphere of feelings and meanings.

The value of musical idioms, like those of a verbal language, is to be estimated in ratio to the directness of their expression, and in proportion to the largest, and not the smallest, number of their uses. Again, cohesion of word or tone particles is the moving spring of idiomatic power; consequently the composer must seek to adjust, and not to dissever, tone sympathies. How greatly and completely Beethoven understood the power and the never-to-be-exhausted depth of the great idioms clustered, in everlasting strength and freshness, round the natural harmonic system! It would seem, to look at his melodies and effects, and at the best efforts of all composers, that the finest flowers and jewels of the art are ever lying close at our feet; and that genius is less the faculty of soaring into remote regions than it is the microscopic power of picking out the flowers and jewels ordinary mortals look too far away for.

To be a composer of great strength great humility is therefore very necessary; he must regard himself perhaps more as an agent in a great and mysterious economy than as a creator. He must learn to accept idioms as the wings of thought. The vain ambition to be original only will defeat itself. But, granting its success is secured, invention of material is not necessarily the expression of thought. One may invent, and yet not compose.

On the other hand, he who knows the depth and strength of universal idioms will, with the constant practice necessary in the manipulation of our distinct tone-language, learn to

express the strongest thoughts by the readiest means; and he is a king of tone-thought producers.

The true artist, too, must be cosmopolitan in his instincts, and gather his idioms and expressions from all schools and periods. Surely he may gain much of that simple strength which characterises all great art work, as it touches all hearts, from the study of those primary musical impulses which can be proved to have done their work equally well at all periods of the art.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN.—Ladies and gentlemen, I am sure you will all cordially agree that we ought to give a very hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Turpin for his excellent paper. Like all grateful people, I hope Mr. Turpin will give us another paper on some future occasion, working out to a larger extent the question of the growth of melodic idioms. His researches into the gradual growth of harmony were so interesting that I am quite sure if he will turn his attention to the very important question of how little scraps of melody become a portion of musical language, he will produce a valuable paper on the subject. As far as I know, it is a new subject. I am not sure I ever heard it mentioned, and it is very refreshing to hear any body come out with such a good common-sense view of the origin of music as Mr. Turpin's in these days when we are overrun with all sorts of philosophic theories about music, especially that last one of Wagner's on the subject of Beethoven, which I dare say you have all read, and in which he gives a very absurd origin of music, making it a sort of intuition of some ideal beauty which exists far away, and which is fished out of the brain by the composer, and in which these ideas are compared to the reminiscences of a dream. I dare say many of you have read that article in which Schopenhauer's metaphysical notion of dreams is applied to the idea of music. I need hardly say that, amusing as it is, it will not stand the test of common sense, whereas Mr. Turpin's theory will. The origin of music has been pointed out by many physiologists to be no doubt owing to the gradual use of the voice between man and man, or man and woman, as the case may be, giving it expression, tenderness, and so on. With regard to Mr. Turpin's remarks about the use of old scales, and their influence on modern music, I am sure we all heartily agree with that. We have had before in this room more than one musician advocating the claims of those scales to study, though it is not suggested that they should interfere with modern music, but should help to explain its resources. Mr. Helmore no doubt

will have something to say on a subject which Mr. Turpin touched upon, namely, the rhythmical form of the early Plain-Song, and I shall be glad to leave it in his hands. Mendelssohn was mentioned as being influenced greatly by Plain-Song, and I think that is very noticeable in many of his works. It seems to me rather a curious thing that as soon as Mendelssohn set music to the "Gloria Patri," he immediately became Plain-songy, if I may use the expression, If we take his "Jubilate," it is in the key of A major, but when it gets to the "Gloria Patri" he gets a bit of old Church melody in A minor for the tenor and bass. I dare say many of you remember the very remarkable "Gloria Patri" at the end of his magnificent Second Psalm. It is largely tinctured with Plain-Song. As regards the Hebrew headings to the Psalms, I must have a little private talk with Mr. Turpin, and get him to give me the name of the book he referred to.

Mr. Turpin.—I will send you the book with great pleasure.

The Chairman.—The only interpretation I have known generally accepted is that some of the expressions refer to the names of tunes which were known to the people; one called "The Vintage," if I remember right, and another "The Hind of the Morning." There are several curious things of that sort, and I fancy it is generally believed that these psalms were written to be sung to some particular tune, which was known to the people. I never heard before that a series of scales were employed; if that is the case it is very interesting, and well deserves looking into. There is a gentleman here who will have something to say about the cadences of the sixteenth century—Mr. Cummings; my experience is that in old copies of sixteenth century Church music the 4-3 was written, but $\frac{6}{4}\ \frac{5}{3}$ was sung. In all old church music, such as that by Farrant, and even in earlier composers, I find uniformly the old distribution 4-3 written under the organ bass, but whenever it was written out in full it was filled up as $\frac{6}{4}\ \frac{5}{3}$. Whether they satisfied their conservative feelings by only putting the 4-3, whilst they satisfied their taste by playing it $\frac{6}{4}\ \frac{5}{3}$, I cannot say, but I fancy it was something of that kind. I shall be glad to hear what Mr. Cummings says about it. As regards the change in the value of time notes, we should all be grateful if we could have an ideal system of notes with reference to the time they would occupy; all the slow movements ought to be written with long notes, and fast ones in short notes, and we should want little marking of time; but it is very unfortunate for us that, as a pure piece of conventionalism, we generally have fast movements in long notes, and all adagios in short notes. I do not remember, in the case of Beethoven's works, any case in which the adagios are not in very small short notes. I have often tried to think if it would be possible to explain that, and I can

only explain it in one way, which is not very creditable to humanity if it is true: I rather fancy that by giving short notes, and saying "Play these very slowly," you really get a more slow rendering—feeling of the actual slowness of the piece is intensified; whilst if you present long notes, and those are got in at a great pace, the reverse is the case, and the sense of playing really at a great pace is rather intensified. As regards the ingenious theory of Mr. Turpin, and also Dr. Macfarren, of the introduction of second themes in the Sonata form, in keys allied to the harmonic scale, I am very sorry not to be able to agree with it. It is one of those things which would be very pretty if they were true. The dominant being the first note in the natural series of harmonics, after the octave, it looks, therefore, as if this harmonic had become the most natural key in which to present the second theme. It seems to me if you only stop there the theory is charming; but when you get to the mediant, that is such a great addition to our store of keys for second themes, that I am afraid the theory will require a little reconsideration before it is generally adopted.

The Rev. T. Helmore.—I am sure I am very happy to second everything in the way of thanks that has been said by our worthy Chairman on the present occasion to Mr. Turpin. The idea he has traced out is one which is very interesting to me as dealing so much with the study which I have been able to give to Plain-Song generally. So far as I could understand him I agree cordially with everything he said. With regard to the ancient accents particularly I think he was quite right that the accents of the Plain-Song were intended as it were to crystallise the ordinary speech of mankind, and that these accents were taken really as the musical expression of certain sentiments and feelings. With regard to the time notes I think that a little more should be allowed for the influence of words and poetry. I think the time notes of ancient music were entirely ruled by the words, and that therefore in almost all Iambic measures we should naturally get a triple movement. I cannot refer to it readily, but I dare say many of you remember an ancient sequence, called the Alleluiatic sequence, which might be barred in triple time from beginning to end; it was a well-known melody which was a great favourite in Henry VIII.'s time, and it is the first melody you find in every hymnal. So almost all the hymns suited to Iambic measures, which constituted the greater number of ancient hymns, were in triple time. Coming on further, we know that the love of symbolism led almost all great writers of music to draw parallels between divine things and music, and we know very well that the most perfect measure, as described in "Morley's School of Music," was the division first of all on a triple basis, and that being subdivided in other triples answering to our compound triple time of the present day. I cannot say anything more except

to add how very much obliged I am to Mr. Turpin for his paper. I should like very much to read and study it, as I shall then be able to follow its meaning more fully than can be done by only a single reading.

Mr. W. H. Cummings.—I had not intended to say anything to-day, but as the Chairman asks me, I may mention that as far as the subject Dr. Stainer referred to, namely, a continuation of this paper, our friend Mr. Grove, who turns his hand to everything, and does everything well, has already commenced a sort of polyglot dictionary of musical melodic phrases. I know he has had it in hand for some years, for I have seen part of it. Perhaps he will some day be here on a more fortunate occasion, when Mr. Turpin will give us a paper such as the Chairman has referred to, and he will be able probably to speak on that subject. I may also say with regard to Mendelssohn's adoption of the peculiar Plain-Song in the morning service that Dr. Stainer referred to, I do not know that it is generally known, but it is a fact, that Mendelssohn was requested to write a service for our Church after the manner of our Church writers, which probably may account for the marked difference in the style of the service referred to from Mendelssohn's ordinary work.

Mr. Stephens.—Do you mean the great service in A?

Mr. Cummings.—Yes. Upon the matter of the cadences which Dr. Stainer referred to, my experience has been just the same as his. I have found that the cadence is always written in the way he mentions in the organ books, but we have always played it in the other way. I need not detain you longer, as I am sure there will be other gentlemen here who will have more to say on this interesting subject, but I cordially thank Mr. Turpin for the splendid paper he has given us. We shall all be thankful to read it carefully, and I am sure we shall gain much by the study of it.

Mr. Stephens.—I may be permitted to make a few remarks about the change that has taken place with respect to the question of musical measures. We are all accustomed to look upon common time, or duple time, perhaps more properly speaking, as the more dignified time of the two, and to look upon 3-4 or 3-8 time as dedicated to matters of frivolity; but it was precisely the reverse in ancient times. They considered the perfect time, as stated in Morley's "Introduction to Music," the triple time, and you find the greatest chorales of the period were in triple time. I think I am right in saying that the other was considered an imperfect time, and is so described in Morley's treatise.

Professor W. H. Monk.—With regard to the remark made by our friend Mr. Stephens, it would be particularly interesting to us now if we could only translate into modern words those two words "perfect" and "imperfect."

Mr. STEPHENS.—Possibly it might alter the impression; it might be only an art term.

Professor MONK.—I should think it has a remote mediæval origin.

Mr. CUMMINGS.—It is well comprehended that, as far as the perfect and imperfect time is concerned, the ancient ecclesiastics considered it perfect simply because it was, like the Deity, triune. It is well understood that that was the origin of triple as perfect time.

Mr. PROUT.—Dr. Burney explained it in that way.

The HONORARY SECRETARY (Mr. HIGGS).—I may call attention to the fact that our common-time signature is really formed by the obliteration of one part of the circle that represented the perfect-time signature; our common time then really means less than perfect, dual, in contradistinction to triple, time.

Mr. STEPHENS.—With regard to the figuring, there is no doubt that in Boyce's "Cathedral Music" the figuring and harmonies written down do not in all cases correspond, particularly in that case of $\frac{6}{4}$ $\frac{5}{3}$.

Mr. TURPIN.—I must thank you, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, for the exceedingly kind manner in which you have received my, I am ashamed to say, hastily written paper. I am a much-occupied man, I have very few opportunities of writing, and have to snatch a few minutes now and then. I hardly hoped to do more than set you talking, and I almost hoped to hear more talking than I have done, still what you have said has been interesting and valuable, and I must also thank you for what has taken place. It is a curious circumstance in connection with triple measure that it seems to be an old tradition—Mr. Helmore or others will correct me if I am wrong—in the Roman Catholic Church to sing triple measures faster in proportion than duple. I cannot account for it, but so it is in the Papal Choir, that in triple measure the pulsatory beats are actually sung quicker than those of duple measures, by some understood tradition.

The CHAIRMAN.—It is so in the old English madrigals.

Mr. SALAMAN.—I beg to propose a vote of thanks to our Chairman for presiding, and also for his very able remarks.

Mr. HELMORE.—I hope I may be allowed to second that.

Dr. Stainer then exhibited some photographs of an old document giving a list of "calls" on the horn, of various kinds. Other examples of the musical notation employed were to be found elsewhere, but as yet no translation of them has been discovered. The photographs were kindly made at the cost of the Rev. J. A. Bennett, of Castle Carey, from a parchment found among the papers of the Rev. W. Pyne, of Charlton House, Castle Carey.

DECEMBER 6, 1880.

W. CHAPPELL, ESQ., VICE-PRESIDENT,

IN THE CHAIR.

A NEGLECTED MUSICAL BENEFACTOR.

By WILLIAM H. CUMMINGS, ESQ.

IN studying the story of the progress of music, as narrated by the historians of the art, I have looked in vain for some account of the rise and development of accompaniment music; and yet I can hardly imagine a more interesting subject for investigation than the history of the gradual development of accompaniment music specially written for keyboard instruments, represented in days gone past by the organ, the virginals, the spinet, the harpsichord, and the clavichord. Let us carry our minds back a couple of centuries. What had the performer of that time to guide him in playing accompaniments to vocal music on either of the instruments I have named? If fortunate, the accompanist might possibly have put before him a manuscript score of the music he had to accompany, but generally he would be compelled to content himself with a meagre skeleton in the shape of a treble and bass, and in both these cases he would be without the aid of figures to represent the harmonies which ought to be superposed on the bass; and further, in both cases, supposing the vocal bass-part ceased for a beat, or for any number of bars, an instrumental bass would then not be written at all. A very skilful musician at the organ or clavichord might possibly contrive to produce a decent accompaniment from a score, and might fairly represent the mind of the composer; but in the other case, where there was only a melody and a bass, he would be compelled to invent his own harmony, which might or might not be like that intended by the author.

I have here a work, published in 1624 at Hamburg, entitled "Scheidt's Tablatura Nova," by which you can judge of an organ score of the time; and I have also a volume of songs, the "Ayres and Dialogues by Henry Lawes," 1653, from which you can easily appreciate the difficulty an accompanist must

have had in endeavouring conscientiously to interpret his author.

The first improvement on this state of things was made about the year 1597 by a monk named Lodovico Viadana, or Lodovico of Viadana. He invented what he called the *basso continuo*, or continued bass, a method which presented great advantages, inasmuch as the bass part was continued as long as there was any voice part or melody. The next, and perhaps a more important invention, was that technically known as a "figured bass." This, of course, was a most admirable aid to the accompanist, as by its means he was able to a great extent to follow the expressed intention of the composer. A "figured bass," as you all know, is a sort of musical shorthand, the figures used, such as 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, indicating corresponding notes or intervals calculated from a given bass-note. It is perhaps not possible to ascertain who was the inventor of a figured bass. Probably it was such a natural outcome of the *basso continuo*, and so essential to it, that several minds may have conceived the advantages which would arise from using figures to indicate chords; certain it is that Peri, Caccini, Viadana, Monteverde, and Deering all employed figures at about the same period. It is curious that none of these eminent musicians ever thought of going a step further, and perfecting their work by adding a fully written-out accompaniment to their vocal scores. They had ample materials which might have suggested such an improvement to them; there were notably the clavier compositions of Frescobaldi, not to mention other works by organists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

I have here, a very remarkable *MS. of Italian organ music written before* 1600, from which we can see that the accompanists must have had plenty of skill both in reading and playing music, and also that they were accustomed to write their organ music with all the parts fully developed. The same statement will apply to England—we know from the "Parthenia," published in 1611, that the organists here must have equalled their brethren of Italy. I have brought with me a *MS. volume of organ music written at the beginning of the seventeenth century*, to show what sort of music was played in England, and also what kind of copy was used at the period referred to.

The duple invention of a "figured and a continued bass" seems both in England and in Italy to have positively postponed the time when a fully written keyboard accompaniment to vocal music would be generally adopted; you may see that by refering to the printed organ parts of Rovetta's "Mottetti" published at Venice in 1650, and of Bassani's "Salmi" published in Venice in 1697, and then for examples at home in England you can see the "Choice Psalmes put into music by

Henry and William Lawes," published in 1648, and Henry Purcell's Sonatas, published in 1683, of which I have brought the "organ or harpsichord" parts, which are only figured *basso continuo*, wanting even a right-hand or treble part.

It must not however be forgotten that there are instances of organ parts of services and anthems which were written in short score in the seventeenth century; the very rare book called "Musica Deo Sacra," by Thomas Tomkins, published in 1668, is a case in point, but, notwithstanding this, the fact remains that composers universally wrote and printed their songs and solos and vocal music with the accompaniments simply indicated by a figured bass; and it is still more remarkable that this habit and custom extended down to the close of the eighteenth century.

Let us think for a moment what a world of beautiful and appropriate thought we have probably lost, owing to this unfortunate method of indicating accompaniment! To speak of Purcell—we know that he accompanied his own music on the organ or harpsichord, but what that accompaniment was like we may only imperfectly imagine—what exquisite fragments of melody—what beautifully interwoven figures, motives, and subjects he may have worked up into a musical picture we cannot tell, but judging from the flow and melody of the parts which he did write out in full, we are forced to believe that his own performance as an accompanist of his own music must have been a thing of beauty; but, alas! owing to his want of knowledge of a method or language for the expression of his musical thoughts, his accompaniments have not remained a joy for ever, but, like many other rich treasures, have become lost in the unfathomable ocean of time.

Again, take the music of Handel; who would confidently assert that he could reproduce the accompaniments the "mighty master" was wont to add to the various recitatives and other solo music? his habit, as we know, was to superintend the performance of his oratorios and operas seated at the harpsichord or organ, but what he played we can only guess.

In Handel's case we may say that he has been a special sufferer; some time early in this century his "recitatives" were divorced from the accompaniment of the instruments for which they were intended, and were relegated to the tender mercies of two performers on a violoncello and double bass, whose vagaries were sometimes fearfully wonderful.

I remember some years ago a distinguished American musician went with me to a great musical festival, and after the rehearsal of an oratorio he enquired of me whether it was the usual thing to accompany Handel's "recitatives" with a combination of scrapes and growls such as he had heard that morning. On my replying that it was, he expressed his astonishment, and said, "Why, sir, it's like a Japanese festival;"

and yet we have at this day some good folk who fondly imagine that the miserable accompaniment of a violoncello and double-bass was the thing intended by Handel.

Of course I know there is something to be said on behalf of playing from a figured bass; doubtless when the player was a man of genius or of more than ordinary talent—like the deceased musicians, Attwood and Wesley, not to mention some few living examples of kindred power—then the accompanist, being free and unfettered, would frequently produce most beautiful "additional accompaniments," perhaps in their way as beautiful as those written by Mozart for Handel's "Messiah"—but the majority of the musical world, whether professional or amateur, is not nor was it ever made up of geniuses, and such being the case, in ninty-nine instances out of a hundred the performance of accompaniments must have been of a very inferior kind. Some of us probably are old enough to remember the style of accompaniment which was fashionable with our grandmothers, a constant series of arpeggios rolling up from the bass, full chords in both hands, a sort of angry sea which seemed to be anxious to overwhelm and drown both singer and player. It perhaps will surprise some of you to learn that the early songs of Haydn were printed with simply a figured bass; the songs of our lesser lights, Dibdin, Shield, and others, were printed in the same way. Suppose then this manner of writing accompaniments had continued to the present day, where would have been the lovely pianoforte parts of Beethoven's "Adelaide," of Schubert's songs, of Schumann's, of Mendelssohn's, and of those by recent living composers?

I have seen a song of which the accompaniment was so elaborate that three staves were needed to permit its being written out properly. Duet accompaniments for the pianoforte (to vocal pieces) were written by Attwood, Spohr, and others. I might dilate to a considerable length on this matter of written accompaniment, but I think I have said enough to induce you to believe with me that the inventor of a properly written part for the harpsichord or pianoforte was indeed "A musical benefactor," and, as his claims have not hitherto been generally recognised, I think I may justly call him "a neglected musical benefactor."

At the Caxton Exhibition, in 1877, I called attention to the inventor of the written harpsichord accompaniment, by exhibiting the publication in which he announced his invention; and I further invited a recognition of his work by inserting a special note in the catalogue. Since that time the publication of the capital "Dictionary of Music and Musicians," edited by Mr. Grove, has commenced, and although not yet complete, it has so far progressed as to have passed in review the life and labours of my hero, Domenico Corri, who was born in 1746, and died in London somewhere about 1825. He came

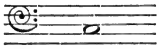
to England in 1771, but soon went to Edinburgh, where he pursued his profession as vocalist and singing-master, and published the work of which I shall speak presently. He was a prolific composer of music, and published largely, but his so-called operas, like his educational works, are now almost forgotten.

The book which entitles him to our lasting gratitude is his "Select Collection of the most admired Songs, Duetts, &c." There are four volumes of this work, of which I have brought the first, as that will suffice to show the nature of Corri's innovation or improvement. I will read you the title of Corri's book, and also some extracts from his preface:—

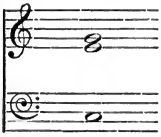
"A Select Collection of the most admired Songs, Duetts, &c., from Operas in the highest esteem, and from other works, in Italian, English, French, Scotch, Irish, &c., &c., in three books: the first consisting of Italian Songs, Rondeaus, Duetts, &c.; the second of English Songs, Duetts, Terzetts, &c.; the third of Airs, Rondos, Canzonette, Duettini, Terzetti, Catches, Glees, &c., all in their respective languages. The music in this work is divided into phrases—as, in reading, sentences are marked by points—and to each are appropriated its Graces, Cadences, &c., with accurate directions for the management of the voice in the execution of them. A proper Accompaniment is also arranged on a plan so distinct as to enable any Harpsichord player to accompany himself with ease, although unacquainted with the rules of Thorough Bass. By Domenico Corri. Edinburgh, printed for John Corri; sold by him and by C. Elliot, Parliament Square, and C. Robinson, Paternoster Row, London."

"Instrumental accompaniment, with respect to song, may be defined, the addition of such parts as are not only just according to the laws of harmony, but also selected and disposed in such a manner as may best serve to support and give effect to the vocal part or parts. There are then three things to be considered: first, the parts themselves; secondly, the choice; and thirdly, the disposition of those parts. The parts themselves are ascertained by the fixed rules of harmony, the choice and disposition belong to taste alone. Agreeably to this definition of accompaniment, Mr. Rousseau, in his musical dictionary, has so fully shown the impossibility of accompanying properly by any method yet in use, that the author thinks it unnecessary to say anything on that head, as he would be obliged to repeat what any of his readers may see on turning to that work, at the article *Accompaniment*. The method of accompanying by the score, by figuring the bass, by the rule of the octave, and by Mr. Rameau's, are there explained with great accuracy, and the disadvantages attending each of them pointed out with respect to the execution. In addition to what Mr. Rousseau says, the author begs leave to observe that in

accompanying, either by the score, by the help of figures, or of certain other signs proposed by Mr. Rameau, the performer still plays by the eye merely; and that his execution is simply an effect of quick sight and practice, and altogether unconnected with the fundamental laws of harmony. The being able, from habit, to read several lines of music at once, to calculate instantaneously the different intervals on an instrument, and to know by certain established rules which note is to ascend, descend, or remain the same, is a very different thing from knowing why this is to be done. This is the science by which those figures or other signs are placed, and with which the mere execution of those signs has no more connection than the reading of a book has with its composition. If then it be granted, as it ought to be, that accompanying by the score, by figures, or by any other signs, is limited to the simple execution of what is noted, figured, or signed, it surely follows that the simpler and more explicit those signs are, the better calculated they must be to answer their end. Now that these and many other advantages particularly belong to the method proposed by the author will be evident on the slightest consideration. For instance, let the mode which is most practised, that of figuring the bass, be compared with that which is now offered to the public. A performer who accompanies by figures, on seeing a note marked thus:—



knows that to this note he must give the accompaniment of the third, fifth, and octave; but this is the extent of his knowledge. It remains to him then to calculate such intervals; and, after having found them, to set them down thus:—



If then this operation of reading the figures and calculating the numbers answers no other purpose than merely that of finding out the notes as written in the second example, is it not evident that having those notes written down will answer every end proposed by the other method, whilst it will save all the trouble which attends it? Let us suppose now, that by practice a performer has attained the greatest facility of calculating on the instrument the numbers expressed in the writing; yet, after all, unless he be thoroughly acquainted

with the fundamental rules of *contrapunto*, he will scarcely be able to play two or three successive chords without commiting some blunder, which the knowledge of the figures alone can neither warn him of nor enable him to avoid.

"Thus it has been shown that the method of accompanying by figures is not only attended with the continual trouble of calculation, but is even insufficient to answer the end for which these figures are employed; and, on the other hand, that by the method here proposed every harpsichord-player will be enabled, at sight, and without a single lesson on the subject, to accompany any piece of music with taste and elegance, as easily as he can play the most simple harpsichord lesson or air. It is true indeed that the rule of the octave, if thoroughly understood, will enable a performer to accompany without making any mistake in point of abstract harmony; but as to the choice and the proper position of these figures, and as to other refinements necessary to accompany with delicacy and expression, the rule of the octave, though ever so well understood, does not in the smallest degree lead to the knowledge of them. This is so true that a performer accompanying according to the laws of thorough-bass, without committing even a single mistake, may produce such an accompaniment as will totally destroy the effect of the music; and, indeed, it almost always happens in the execution of the harpsichord-accompaniment, that the delicate arrangement of parts, which cost the composer the greatest pains, is totally subverted and spoiled by the thorough-bass player; who, instead of attending to this arrangement, endeavours to show his knowledge in his own science by cramming in as many full chords as possible, to the entire confusion of the melody and expression of the composition. The reason of this will be obvious if the reader considers what has already been said in the definition given of accompaniment; from which it is evident that to accompany properly it is necessary to possess both a profound knowledge of the science of harmony, and a refined taste in the choice and disposition of its parts. Now it is well known that these things are perfectly distinct and unconnected; insomuch, that a person may be a complete master of the science of *contrapunto* without having any taste at all. The laws of harmony are deduced from the physical principles of sound alone: they are a subject of calculation; and, as such, may with propriety become the abstract science of a deaf man as well as of one who has the nicest ear. On the contrary, the art of arranging the parts of harmony depends on a strong and exquisite feeling of their effects; and it is, of consequence, the production of sensibility alone. It is the united operation of that science and of this feeling which produces a fine accompaniment; and every composer knows how much labour this part of his

work costs him. How then can it be supposed that a performer, though a master, can dispose an accompaniment as judiciously at first sight as the best composer is able to do in his closet after deliberate study and reiterated experiment? The absurdity of such a supposition is glaring. If then the impossibility of accompanying tolerably by any of the methods hitherto invented be obvious; and if another be found, at once easier to the performer, and more perfective of the harmony; it is to be wished that the public would enforce their approbation of it, by obliging the editors of music, instead of writing figures to the bass, to give a single line, as done in the present work, in which the proper accompaniment is expressed by notes."

"To conclude. In pointing out the errors and defects in the present mode of noting music, and stating the improvements which the author offers to the public, he is not conscious of misrepresentations: he assures his readers that he has been guided only by a love of truth, and an ardent desire of improving the science he professes. But if, notwithstanding, some persons should make objections to his work, he entreats they will not attempt to depreciate it in private companies, where the subject may not be perfectly understood; but state their objections in a public manner, and address them to the author in Edinburgh; and if it shall appear that he has fallen into error, he will be ready to acknowledge and retract it."

This is a very clear statement of the author's suggestion as to accompaniments; yet Fétis never mentions this part of Corri's labours. Although he gives an extended biography of him, it is clear he never saw the book. The notice of Corri in Grove's Dictionary is but scant, and wholly incorrect, and moreover it omits all mention of his invention. Other musical biographical works appear to be equally ignorant of Corri's special achievement.

I now invite you to look at Corri's beautifully engraved book, and at the special accompaniments; I ask you also to notice the frontispiece, pictorially depicting the "old system" and "*Corri's new system.*" And I trust that in future when, either as composer or executant, you are revelling in the delight of creating or of interpreting some charming accompaniment, you will not fail to think of him whom I have ventured to call "a neglected musical benefactor."

In speaking of Corri as the inventor of a written accompaniment, of course I refer only to England. I do not know what is the first instance of its use on the Continent. As I have before said, Haydn's earliest printed songs were published with a thorough-bass only, and, indeed, the first pianoforte accompaniment to Haydn's "Creation" was the work of Muzio Clementi.

It is interesting also to note that Corri was the publisher of

Haydn's well-known canzonets, which had a pianoforte accompaniment. The title-pages of all the copies of these canzonets issued in the first edition were signed by Haydn, and had his address, 1, Bury Street, St. James's, and also Corri's address, Bridge Street, Edinburgh, with a notification that copies might be had at both places.

It should also be remembered that Mozart, when eight years of age, had published and sold at his lodgings, Thrift Street, Soho, a set of sonatas for the "clavecin" and violin or flute, in which the clavecin part was printed under the violin part. This was in 1765. The clavecin part, although without figures to the bass, is so thin and meagre that we may be quite sure it is only a skeleton of what the juvenile composer himself played.

DISCUSSION.

Major Crawford.—I should simply like to ask Mr. Cummings one question—whether he has made any investigation as to the period when the new practice originated in France or Germany?

Mr. Cummings.—No. I might have said that, and I had intended to, but that I thought I had already said too much. I have not made any inquiry as to the practice in France or Germany, but I can mention this as a curious fact, that when Haydn came to London, his first set of canzonets were published in London, and with the proper accompaniment. Curiously enough he signed all the copies himself. He then lived in Great Pulteney Street; afterwards he lived in Bury Street; and he signed the copies himself: but that work was actually engraved and published by Corri in Edinburgh; therefore it looks very much as if Corri had some hand in it. Whether Corri, being an Italian, had obtained some hint abroad for his work I cannot say; possibly he did; all I know is, I have not met with anything anterior to it; and to him belongs clearly the merit of having introduced it into England—there can be no doubt about that.

Mr. Salaman.—Who was Haydn Corri?

Mr. Cummings.—A son of this man.

Mr. J. Duke Coleridge.—It is not a matter of very much importance, but probably it might have some bearing on what you were just saying. If I remember rightly, Mrs. Hunter, the wife of John Hunter, the great anatomist, wrote the words of the celebrated canzonet, "My mother bids me bind my hair," and that may possibly account for the publication of the canzonet in Edinburgh, she being a Scotch lady.

Mr. Cummings.—The canzonets are dedicated to her. I am not certain she did not write the words of the whole six.

Mr. Salaman.—Corri was the composer of several operas; one called "The Travellers," which I have at home. He was also professor in London for some time.

Dr. Bridge.—Have you any idea when accompaniments to ecclesiastical music were introduced?

Mr. Cummings.—Not until Attwood's time, I think.

Dr. Pole.—It must be recollected that Mozart wrote a great many of his songs with a pianoforte accompaniment, and he only died about fifteen or sixteen years after the date mentioned. So that the pianoforte accompaniment must at any rate have come into use in Germany soon after that date, if it did not exist before; but it may be discovered by searching Köchel's Catalogue whether any of the songs written by Mozart with an accompaniment are anterior to that date. Many have no pianoforte accompaniment.

The Hon. Secretary.—Dr. Pole's remark has reminded me that the celebrated harpsichord song of Handel's in "Rinaldo" was written with an accompaniment for the harpsichord, with additional accompaniments for stringed instruments.

Dr. Bridge.—That did not include all the accompaniments, it was only a part of the whole.

The Hon. Secretary.—No, it was treated as a part of the concert.

Mr. Cummings.—It should not be forgotten that Mozart was in London when eight years old, that was in 1763, when he published a set of sonatas for the clavecin, a very rare book, but there the clavier part is written out underneath the violin part. I think we shall find instances of instrumental, but I do not know of any vocal music previously. I have referred entirely to vocal music, not to instrumental.

Mr. Salaman.—It is a very interesting discovery indeed.

The Chairman.—If there are no other remarks to be made I will call on Mr. Cummings to read the next paper.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT HANDEL.

By William H. Cummings, Esq.

My "few words about Handel" will chiefly bear on the question of the spelling of his name.

When some 300 years ago our national dramatist wrote the query, "What's in a name?" he little dreamt of the amount of disputation which would arise in after-times respecting the rightful spelling of his own. Probably many of you have seen the capital little essays on the spelling of Shakespeare's name which have been recently published by Mr. Halliwell-Phillips. Curiously, in the case of Shakespeare the momentous question is about the two letters *e* and *a*—and in respect to our great composer it is whether he shall be called Handel or Hendel. Some persons will be disposed to say, What does it matter how you spell the name, so long as there be no misunderstanding about the identity of the individual? but I would remind such of the serious case put by Byron in "Don Juan":—

> Thrice happy he whose name has been well spelt
> In the despatch: I knew a man whose loss
> Was printed *Grove*, although his name was Grose.

Now in many cases there has been great difficulty in deciding how to spell a man's name, and for this reason—that the owner would seem to have had no settled way of spelling it himself. Of course one is not surprised at this when the man happens to be an illiterate individual like our old friend Sam Weller, who was content to have it spelt "With a V, my lord." But when educated people trouble themselves little about the spelling of their names, I think there *is* matter for wonder. However, that such was the case until quite recent times is certain. The great Earl of Dudley spelt his name Duddeley—his wife Duddley. Edward Allen, the actor and founder of Dulwich College, signed his own name Alleyn, Aleyn, Allin, Allen—his wife spelt hers Alleyne. Sir Walter Raleigh spelt his Rauley and Ralegh. Purcell spelt his own name sometimes with a *c* and sometimes with an *s*. Creighton spelt his name in two or three different ways.

Now let us come to Handel. There can be no doubt that at his baptism he received the surname as spelt by his father—that is to say, with the *e* over the *a*, or the equivalent in dots. I may here say that the actual day of his birth has been sometimes disputed, although of course the books of the Church of Notre Dame de St. Laurent, at Halle, show that he was baptised on February 24, 1685, and as it was the usual custom at

that time to baptise a child the day after birth, it was reasonably argued that Handel must have been born on the 23rd.

Here, however, is distinct proof of the fact; this document which I have brought for your inspection is the only existing direct evidence on the point. It is a funeral sermon which was printed for the Handel family on the death of Handel's mother in 1730, and on page 23 the date of the birth of George Frederick is given; this, the only copy, was preserved by the family, and is therefore very precious.

We find that when Handel went to Italy he spelt his name Hendel; but when he came to England he seems immediately to have substituted the *a* for *e*, and wrote himself down as Handel. His friend and amanuensis Schmidt in like manner anglicised his name to Smith; and in these forms they subscribed to the first bond of union of the Society of Musicians, now known as the Royal Society of Musicians. That Handel adopted this mode of spelling with intention is further shown by his petition to the House of Lords, dated February 13, 1726, in which he twice spells his name Handel; on the next day, the 14th, he attended the House of Lords, and took the necessary oaths in that name; and the private Act of Parliament naturalising him passed the house with the name so spelt, and it received the royal assent on February 20, 1726. In his oratorios he frequently subscribed his name and the date of composition: in these instances he always spelt it Handel; and to come to the last act of his life—the making his will—here again he spelt the name Handel. I have brought Handel's original will in his own autograph with me, as I am sure you will be interested to look at this touching memorial and his several signatures.

If Handel was so anxious to make himself an Englishman, surely we ought not to be anxious to denationalise him; but you may have noticed what a common thing it is for writers nowadays, perhaps with a desire to be thought learned or to show that they have an intimate knowledge of the German language, to put two dots over the *a*. I hope you will agree with me that the practice should be abandoned, and that we ought to be content to spell the name as the great master himself preferred it.

I should add that Handel, in writing to his own family from England, and writing in German (even to his mother), spelt his name Handel. This I know, because several of these interesting letters have quite recently been in my possession.

Further, the German Handel Society, under the able editorship of Dr. Chrysander, issue their volumes with a special title-page (I presume for England) in which the name is spelt, as of right it should be, Handel.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN having invited discussion—

Mr. SOUTHGATE.—Perhaps Mr. Cummings will kindly tell us how it is that the will is not in Doctors' Commons, and how he came possessed of it—

Mr. CUMMINGS.—In the first place, there are no wills in Doctors' Commons—fortunately they have all been removed to Somerset House. I took this will down to Somerset House one day, and saw a kind gentleman there, the superintendent, who was most anxious to appropriate it. The truth is that it was not at all uncommon in Handel's day for people to make a will in duplicate. They have a copy at Somerset House, but it has been so repeatedly thumbed, and tied up with tape, that the signature is almost obliterated. They were very anxious that I should make an exchange, but you can well understand that I preferred not to do so. How I became possessed of it was very simple. This will was bought from the executor of Handel, Mr. Amyand, by Mr. Snoxell; and when Mr. Snoxell died all his things were sold at Puttick and Simpson's some short time since, and I then bought the will at public auction.

Major CRAWFORD.—I would only remark that the question with regard to the adoption of one particular spelling of any man's name arises chiefly in the case of dictionaries or catalogues, and such other occasions when you have to enter everything you have to say about him or his works under one particular heading. With regard to speaking of Handel, or writing about him in the ordinary way, I quite agree with what Mr. Cummings says; but on the other hand the question arises, what rule are you to follow, if you have to make a heading in a dictionary, for example? In that case, as I have had something to do with such matters, I have found that the simplest rule is always to follow the spelling to which your man was entitled by birth, and which you find in his baptismal register as being the spelling of his family, not the spelling which he may employ afterwards for one reason or another. There is no question whatever that Handel, as Mr. Cummings has remarked, did adopt what I may call the English form of the name, but it must be remembered too that the change thus made was extremely slight. It was not, as in the case of his secretary, a change from the German form of the name from Schmidt to Smith, but it was simply dropping the two dots over the letter *a*, retaining the spelling—retaining every letter exactly as before, and simply dropping the dots, the meaning of which very few people in England then understood. It left the apparent spelling of the name precisely as it stood before. Those dots, representing the letter *e*, would to the eye of a German change the pronuncia-

tion, but that was all; therefore, the change was a very slight one indeed. No doubt in England he was always called Mr. Handel; sometimes his name was spelt with two *l*'s and sometimes *dle*, I believe. For certain purposes, such as I have mentioned, it appears to me that the best rule is to follow the baptismal name, but this does not interfere with your calling your man by any name you choose afterwards, or by any name he chooses to adopt himself.

Mr. VICTOR DE PONTIGNY.—With regard to the variety in the spelling of proper names, I may say that I know two brothers in France, in the province of Auvergne, who spell their names differently.

Dr. POLE.—How Handel's name was sometimes pronounced would be seen in Byron's lines :—

> Others say that he to Handel
> Is not fit to hold a candle.

The CHAIRMAN.—He chose to be naturalised under the name of Handel.

Mr. CUMMINGS.—May I say, in answer to Major Crawford, that I think his argument is plausible, but that it would not always apply. Take a well-known man, as, for instance, the Rev. Mr. Bellew, well-known as a public reader, what would be the use of putting in a biographical dictionary Higgin? but that was his name. How would you discover that Higgin was Mr. Bellew? Again, take the case of the late Mr. Compton, the actor—his name was Mackenzie, but he adopted the name of Compton. As we have a distinguished member of the legal profession now present, I should like to take counsel's opinion upon it. Handel had actually an Act of Parliament authorising him to take a particular name, and I would like to ask the question whether that was not the proper name by which he should be recognised in England; whether, the name having been granted him by Act of Parliament, as has been shown, he was not actually bound to be known in England under the name as it was spelt in that Act of Parliament. If Mr. White would give us the information I should be glad.

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—I do not think legal considerations have much weight in this matter. Handel wrote his name "Handel," and when he came for an Act of Parliament which naturalised him, having spelt it in that way, it would naturally be so spelt in the Act of Parliament. I do not think there would be anything illegal or contrary to legal authority if he had chosen afterwards to go back and spell his name with the modified *ä*. Therefore, as a legal proposition, I should think it was immaterial whether it be spelt Handel or Händel. I should go all the way with Mr. Cummings in his

suggestion that, for Englishmen familiar with the name in the form of "Handel," which he adopted himself, it would be better and more appropriate so to spell it. If I had to spell the word myself, I should certainly do so; but I should not be very much influenced in my choice of spelling by the legal considerations referred to by Mr. Cummings.

Dr. GROVE.—Major Crawford's rule is a very good one, but like many other good rules is not always applicable. For instance, take Hugh Pearson, his name was originally Pearson, and his Christian name Hugh; he went to Germany and adopted the German method of spelling it, and called himself Hugo Pierson. It would be absurd to put his name in the dictionary Pearson, because nobody would find it. Under the heading Pierson, you could state that his name was originally in the other form, and that he had changed it. In all these rules, when you come to work with them, you find occasions occur in which you must drop the strict rule, and let common sense step in.

Mr. SALAMAN.—There was Schudy, the famous harpsichord-player; he changed it from Tschudi to Schudy. Handel signed his name "Handel" in the celebrated "Harpsichord Lessons," published in 1720. Surely a man ought to know how to spell his own name.

Mr. COLERIDGE.—Does it not complicate it farther by saying he has signed it Hondel?

Mr. CUMMINGS.—There is a curious sermon printed in Germany, in which the letter *e* is put over the letter *a*. Mr. Schölcher makes a sad muddle of the name. Schölcher gives a number of names—he has taken the genitive case as the nominative. The fact remains that Handel, when he wrote his name in England, even in writing a German letter to his mother in Germany, signed his name Handel without the dots. I think that is a very strong point indeed. In England he never wrote it in any other way. So I think as Englishmen we ought to be content with that form and keep to it. It saves a great deal of trouble.

The CHAIRMAN.—I think you will all cordially join in thanking Mr. Cummings for his papers, which have given us great pleasure, and also for the very interesting documents with which he has accompanied them. I think it will be a great treat for those interested in the matter to look over such papers as these.

JANUARY 3, 1881.

EBENEZER PROUT, ESQ., B.A.,

IN THE CHAIR.

THE PRINCIPLES OF MUSICAL CRITICISM.

By JOHN STAINER, Esq., M.A., Mus. Doc.

THE subject on which I am to address you to-day is so wide that it would be impossible to do more than to give a very brief sketch of the whole, or to enter with some minuteness into the details of a special branch. I propose to take the latter course, and, in order to clear the ground before us, I will begin by stating what I do *not* propose to touch upon.

I shall say nothing about the criticism of performers or performances; and I must, I am sorry to say, entirely ignore the principles of criticising the primary uses of the constituent parts of music—sounds shaped into outline, welded into chords, successively arranged into rhythms, or of sentences grouped into definite forms. Nothing could be of greater interest than these subjects; but I feel bound to take advantage of the status of my hearers, and therefore I shall ask you to allow me to try and, if possible, formulate those deep-seated principles on which is founded the true criticism of a musical work of art—a composition. Either consciously or unconsciously every educated person founds his opinion of the merits of a composition on some well-defined grounds. But this process is so often gone through unconsciously, or, at all events, unreflectively, that I think an analysis of it cannot but be useful. I fear I cannot also say that it will be interesting. I am aware that papers and discussions on this subject are generally accounted of great interest, but chiefly, as far as I can discover, because, instead of digging down to first principles, they are allowed to drift away to a discursive eulogy on the glories of some particular schools or authors, brought out into a bright prominence in the foreground by a dark background of disparagement or abuse of their rivals or inferiors. No such keen sport awaits you this afternoon. I am going to ask you to trace back to their source the laws by which you are

every day producing your judgments; I ask you to analyse your own mental processes.

The earliest stage of art-criticism consists in a judgment couched in the following form: "This gives me pleasure." There is also a suppressed judgment to the effect that the object of art is to give pleasure—hence any work of art producing this result is pronounced to be good. But this conclusion, founded, as it really is, on the simple sensation, fails to form a standard of merit, simply because it turns out to be so variable. What is pleasant to one is often unpleasant to another; so that the function of criticism is not to say how much pleasure A., B., or C. has derived from a composition, but,—in which case may the pleasure be taken as real proof of merit in the work. No doubt a street boy derives just as much pleasure from a cornet and harp duet at a street corner as the *habitué* of the Crystal Palace Concerts does from the symphony of the day. I ask your special attention to this view of the case because there is rapidly springing up a school of critics who are about to call upon all musical enthusiasts to emancipate themselves from the so-called scholastic criticism, and to return once more to the only natural criterion—namely, that the pleasant is good; also that the opinion of the untechnical hearer of a musical work is not only equal, but superior, to that of the critic who is also an expert, because the untechnical hearer will give an unbiassed opinion as to the natural effect of the music on his emotions, whereas, the expert will be tempted to refer a work to this or that category, or to measure it by some conventional standard, both of which are purely arbitrary. These reformers also say that the mere *fact* that a composition happens to belong to a particular style or category does not give pleasure, therefore this fact and all arguments drawn from it as to the merit of the work are absurd. This sounds delightfully simple, but it hides an egregious fallacy. The only way to expose it is to admit that "the amount of pleasure it is capable of giving" is the true test of a work of art, but to ask, "*Whose pleasure* is the test?" It is clear that at this point musical criticism begins to emerge from a mere statement of greater or less intensely pleasurable sensations into the sphere of a set of principles to which, in the main, the most educated and appreciated have given their assent. Just as good grammar remains good grammar although the educated who speak it may happen to be a very small minority; and just as justice, truthfulness, and self-sacrifice remain duties eternally binding on humanity, notwithstanding the small proportion of men who actually and unreservedly practise them, so also the principles of art-criticism are nothing more nor less than the *consensus* of the fittest on the true characteristics of that which gives the highest order of pleasure in the best possible way. Of course

there are times when conventional criticism becomes at once so weak and so overbearing that a healthy resistance overthrows it. With such a movement as this I could heartily sympathise; but, on the other hand, it is quite possible to be a reformer without being a nihilist. Musical criticism is at the present moment oscillating dangerously between the two extremes of dogmatic conventionalism and unblushing nihilism. I think it is the duty of us all to try and steady it.

It is quite certain that every composition professes to *be something*, or to have a purpose. A piece of music is rarely without a definite title, and, even when this is wanting, the very manner in which it is written, and the performers for whom it is written, throw it immediately into some known category. In short, before we attempt to give an opinion of the merits of a work, we unconsciously ask, To what class of works does it claim to belong? or, For what purpose was it intended? This, I take it, is a mere truism. The answer to this question will be found to separate between the sacred and the secular, the sonata and the romance, the dance-tune and the chamber-classic; in fact, to break up the mass of works which exist or may exist into groups. In solving this question we are really probing the "intention of the composer."

It may be asked, Why not criticise a work regardless of the objects or purpose which its author had in view?—it may also be urged that the composer's intention is not a *portion of the work*, and therefore cannot come within the legitimate scope of criticism. The answer to this is, that a work of art absolutely without a purpose, or destined for some special object, is an inconceivable thing. Do not misunderstand me: I have no intention of stating that a work of art is brought into existence for some *use*, but only for some purpose. In short, the author's intention is, as it were, the protoplasm from which develops, bit by bit, the art-work, and out of which it goes on developing in particular directions, according to the purpose for which it is intended. It will now, I think, be clear that we cannot be said to *criticise* really the composer's intentions; we require certainly to know them, and why?—in order that we may see how far he has succeeded in moulding his work in accordance with his design. In short, we do not criticise "intentions," but the relation between the purpose and the work; and this choice of purpose, or the direction it takes, throws a work of art into some distinct class; hence we began by saying that the class of compositions to which a piece claims to belong must be known.

But assuming that the work presented to us *does* belong legitimately to the class to which it lays claim to belong, the next question is, How shall we measure its merit as a representative of that class?

Its position in that class must evidently be determined—

(*a*) By the point of time in which it was composed, with relation to the actual development of that class at that time; and—

(*b*) Its merit when compared with contemporary efforts of the same kind.

I think this position can hardly be attacked. As an illustration, let me say that if you found a book of "Songs without Words," without date, I assert that it would be impossible to gauge their merits without finding out whether they were written before 1800 or after 1850. In the one case the author would have struck out a new line; in the latter he might perhaps be a mere plagiarist. Similarly, the composer of a symphony at the present moment has to be judged by a totally different standard to that which would be enforced if he had been writing before the year 1800. The real principle which lies at the root of this apparently shifting standard of merit is merely this: we feel that all thought should be accumulative; we demand that the true artist should always be in the front of humanity, watching and sharing the bold dashes of its self-sacrificing pioneers, not wasting his time amongst the lazy or cowardly in the rear; he must be a hero, not a camp-follower; he possesses, moreover, a noble inheritance from the hoarded thought and experience of his art-ancestors; we expect him to "improve his property"; he is indeed "the heir of the ages." What a glorious birthright! but, alas, how many, without remorse, sell it for a mess of pottage!

We have now reached the point at which, the surrounding conditions of a work of art being known, we are capable of forming an opinion on its merits. But what constitutes merit in a work of art? I think it is of two kinds:—

(*a*) Merit of conception (or initial design);

(*b*) Merit of treatment (or fulfilment).

It is evident that merit of conception springs from the natural gifts of an author, and also that merit of treatment to a great extent grows out of his artistic education.

This, I imagine, will not be denied. For we are all familiar with the outpouring of untutored talent, with its suggestiveness, its want of finish, its masterly strength for short flights, its failure in any attempt to produce continuous unity. We are also equally familiar with the polished manipulation and perfect finish of works produced by the highly cultivated musician who lacks genius. Of course he who is both original in conception and artistic in finish rises high above all competitors. But of those who cannot claim both these qualifications, which do we value most,—the genius who is not a real artist, or the artist who possesses no real genius? The fact is, we cannot blame an artist for his lack of genius, whereas a genius certainly deserves blame for not having made himself an artist. It thus happens that we respect the artist without

genius, while we cannot but admire untutored genius. The balance of our opinion may in such cases be very even, but the two sides of the scales are filled with very different stuff. On the one hand, every spark of genius is attractive, its influence is marvellous, it calls forth warm emotion. On the other hand, artistic treatment, taken by itself, never calls up more than cold compliment; our enthusiasm remains unstirred. Sometimes, indeed, the problem is reduced to the simple question as to the relative value of spontaneity and conventionality,—who then can doubt for one moment as to his choice? Let the tutored expert praise the conventional, the human heart will always sympathise with the spontaneous. The intellect may revel in the artistic, but genius is embraced by the very soul. Having thus distinguished between merit of conception and merit of treatment, it is natural to ask how we can apply a test to "merit of conception."

Is "originality" the *only* merit of a conception? Is it not a merit that one conception should be more sharply defined or better expressed than another? I fully anticipate that there will be some difference of opinion on this subject, but I am inclined to say that there are two kinds of merit of conception:—

(*a*) Originality of matter;

(*b*) Excellence of form.

It may be, or rather, it often has happened, that many thoughtful men have had a hazy, undefined reaching after some new phase of beauty or of truth, which has eluded their grasp until such time as a master-mind has stepped in, and, by co-ordination or formulating, has snatched up the nearly lost threads, and exhibited to mankind its own longings woven into an objective reality. Similarly, merit of treatment may, I think, be considered as two-fold:—

(*a*) As to originality of matter;

(*b*) As to excellence as an example of accepted method.

Here it must be distinctly understood that these and similar divisions are not mutually exclusive, and that the highest composers excel in both.

This division, both of merit of conception and merit of treatment, into two branches each, may be at first sight pronounced cumbersome and unnecessary. But, since committing it to paper, I have come across a strong proof of its necessity. You are no doubt all of you familiar with the most interesting letter from Mendelssohn to Hiller (on p. 82 of Hiller's "Recollections of Mendelssohn"), in which is given an account of the performance of Hiller's Overture in D minor at Leipsic, in January, 1837. After praising most warmly the originality and beauty of the themes of the overture, Mendelssohn says: "I dislike nothing more than finding fault with a man's nature or talent; it only depresses and worries, and does no good;

one cannot add a cubit to one's stature; all striving and struggling are useless there, so one has to be silent about it, and let the responsibility rest with God. But in a case like the present, with your work, where all the themes, everything which is talent or inspiration (call it what you will), is good and beautiful and impressive, *and the development alone not good*, then I think it may not be passed over; there, I think blame can never be misplaced,—that is the point where one can improve one's-self and one's work. . . . Don't go and tell me . . . that your treatment is always as good as your invention; I don't think it is. . . . The two overtures are certainly your best things, but *the more clearly you express yourself* the more one feels what is wanting, and what, in my opinion, you ought to remedy." Hiller's remarks on this "affectionate lecture" are not so much a defence of his own workmanship as a counter-thrust at Mendelssohn's principles of criticism. Hiller says: "It seems to me to be a mistake to consider the after-development to be less dependent on original genius than the first discovery; for if this development rests only on what has been learned and studied, if the qualities of poetical creation do not come into play in the same degree in both cases, if it is not fresh, living, and original, it cannot make any impression." He adds: "I find the proof of this opinion in the masterpieces which adorn our art. In the best works of the five great masters, Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, it is impossible to point out any separation between invention and treatment." The skill of this counter-thrust is apparent, but all that it goes to prove is this, that composers can only produce true *masterpieces* when they *combine* these varied qualities of natural gifts and artistic treatment; when they exhibit an originality of conception, and a power of presenting the matter of that conception in the best possible form; and when the method of their thematic treatment is both original in design and polished in execution. In all the beautiful letter of Mendelssohn from which I have quoted there runs the purest stream of true art-criticism, shaded by that mixture of playfulness and affection which makes all he writes so natural and so sympathetic. I therefore leave my two-fold division of conception, and also of treatment, as I wrote them, although I still feel that much may be said against this course.

But I have been using a word which calls at once for definition. I have spoken of originality—what is it?

I should define it as "the stamp of individuality left by a composer on his work." I know that all idealists will challenge this definition, they would almost wish us to believe that originality is a sort of spiritual possession; a direct inspiration vouchsafed from the eternal fount of all that is very good, impelling the selected prophet to shun the beaten tracks of social

intercourse, and in solitude, and with thought abstracted from the external and turned inwards, to catch a glimpse of truth and beauty, even if he be able to touch no more than the mere fringe of the robe of the passing deity. You will find ranging below this idealistic view all kinds of definitions, until you reach the lowest ebb of materialism, which has no compunction in describing original genius simply as "a superior perceptive faculty, arising from abnormal excitability and elasticity in the nervous centres." Fortunately, I think we are not called upon to enter this old and well-trodden arena of controversy. It is enough for us, I think, to agree that an artist can after all only turn into his art-work that sense and power of beauty which is *in him;* as to the question whence comes his special gift, we can let others fight about it. That original genius either is, or is seen through, intense individuality, must I think be admitted, when we consider that the greater art-giants men grow, the more distinctive and separated from each other do they become in their works. The musical composition of the highest writer can be unhesitatingly pronounced to be his, and his alone; the mediocre work might be by anybody.

As I have described originality as "the stamp of individuality left by a composer on his work," I may be asked to say in what artistic individuality consists. I should be inclined to define it as "the special emotional bias and intellectual bearing of a creative genius." I suppose no one will deny that it is *creativeness* which differentiates genius from mere refinement or knowledge, and I think it is equally clear that it is the peculiar grasp of the mental powers, combined with a special impressibility of the feelings in certain directions, which helps to make up our concept of that unthinkable whole—a genius.

Is the sphere or scope of originality limited? Yes, certainly. Its progress this way or that is determined by the state of contemporary feeling or knowledge; it can only reach forward and lay hold on some truth or form of beauty lying just outside the ordinary circle of thought. In other words, though a genius is always in advance of his age, and in this way secures the appreciation and praise of his posterity, yet he is only, after all, a growth from the soil (so to speak) of his surroundings, albeit he may exhibit a remarkable and unexpected development. There is one principle of criticism which naturally falls into this part of my subject, and evokes a thought which ought to make critics both cautious and humble. It is this: The deepest writer is really writing only for the deepest thinker. The most polished creative genius calls into existence his works of art for the appreciation and pleasure only of the most highly cultivated. It is therefore a simple truth, though it sounds somewhat paradoxical, to say, that the more a composer is taking pains to excel in refinement and truthfulness of

expression, the more he is actually narrowing the circle of possible interpreters and admirers. If a critic is listening to a work which he feels he does not understand, the question he must ask is, Does it fail to impress me because it is from the standpoint of an intellectual and emotional training far above my head, or is it unintelligible because it is not a true exponent of art? That such an important and plain question could ever be wrongly answered seems absolutely incredible. But the history of musical criticism during the last century shows scores of such blunders. I am afraid we can hardly hope that some erudite modern critic will be persuaded to give us an account of these sayings of former unjust judges and false prophets in art. It would be an interesting chapter of history, and might teach a useful lesson to poor humanity, which, like a silly believer in dreams, loves to make a careful record of those foretellings which have come to pass, but somehow or other has always forgotten to keep a list of those which have never had any counterpart in fact. When it was really a difficult thing to say whether a new work of musical art was above contemporary critical faculties or below them, it was fashionable, fifty years ago, to pronounce it at once—beneath criticism. Like all fashions, this has been followed by a reaction, which is showing itself in these days; for society, determined now to be on the safe side, seems ready to "gush" over every novelty which is presented to it with becoming credentials. Perhaps, on the whole, this latter is the healthier state of the two; posterity can easily take care to nurture and adopt what calm reflection shows to be good, whilst committing with a smile the falsely praised to the waste-paper basket, rolled up in its own compliments.

Having now discovered that we must first criticise the connection between the composer's initial conception and its fulfilment, then the matter and form of his conception, and lastly, the matter and form of his treatment of his conception, it seems to me that the next principle on which we shall venture to attach a label of value to his work will be by discovering whether he has entered into a high walk of art or not. You can see at once that the few principles already laid down may be applied to a work even of the smallest pretensions; we must, therefore, test further the value of a work, assuming that it satisfies the demands to which it has already been subjected.

On what principle can one walk of the art of music be considered higher than another? We must, without doubt, say that the branch of the art which gives the greatest scope for the free use of the most varied material is the highest, and offers the most severe test to the composer. This surely requires no justification; the most talented and successful composer of drawing-room ballads could hardly ask to have his

name bracketed with that of Beethoven on the ground that he had reached the highest point of excellence in his own particular branch, and that no greater praise than this could be awarded to Beethoven, although he happened to compose symphonies. The claim of the ballad-writer would, of course, be laughed at; but if we seek to give the reason why, it will turn out to be that he has not chosen the highest walk of his art, and therefore cannot ask to be placed among the greatest artists. This is, of course, an extreme case, but the principle holds good in all intermediate stages.

It is however sometimes necessary to compare the relative merits of two compositions, one of which excels in a lower class, whilst the other, aiming at a higher level, falls short of its intent. I think most people are inclined to answer this question in a rough and ready way; they will say, "a good loaf is better than a bad sovereign," so a good ballad is better than a bad symphony. But the comparison is not always so easy as this. If A. has produced say three first-rate ballads, and B. three symphonies which are pronounced to be "not bad," which of the two is to be placed uppermost in the roll of fame? To answer this fairly we must find out whether B. is young, whether his three symphonies are the probable forerunners of three much better works, or whether they represent the highest flight he is likely to make. Such qualifications as these should always be stated in criticising the ambitious efforts of new authors; although the critic who has to write hurriedly and supperless after a late evening concert, is often tempted to neglect such nice discriminations.

I have just now said that the highest walk of musical art is "that which gives the greatest scope for the free use of the most varied material." What form of composition answers to this? You are, of course, aware that there will here be much division of opinion. Some would answer unhesitatingly, the Symphony; others would say, with equal confidence, the Opera. The battle over this question is even now raging; it would be impossible for us to take part in it to-night, but it may be interesting to try and find out the *casus belli*. It may, I think, be roughly stated thus: If music be looked upon as a language in itself, capable of expressing the deepest thoughts and rousing the highest emotions, it may claim to be a higher form of speech—"where speech ends, music begins." To set words to music—that is, to incorporate vocal music with instrumental—is therefore, from this point of view, to descend from the higher to the lower; to drag down a heavenly communing to an earthly story; to give up that which is necessarily indefinite, because it is a breath from the infinite, for that which chains us irrevocably to the finite. If, on the other hand, music is merely a branch of poetry, made up of beauty of wave-form (quality of tone), beauty of outline in pitch

(melody), beauty of combinations and successions, and so on, then it falls below the poetry of speech in its want of *definiteness*, and it certainly must bow down before what have been called "the eternal rights of poetry."

Those who take the former view say practically that it is a condescension on the part of music to throw its beauteous light on to the pages of poetry; that poetry has everything to gain by the betrothal, music much to lose. They will also say that Beethoven's "Choral Symphony" has only one blemish, and that is that it is choral at all. Not so, says the other side; Beethoven, finding that the force and meaning of instrumental music could go no further, was constrained to incorporate "speech in song." I will leave this pretty dispute in your hands to settle according to your individual fancies. I ought, however, to add that round this central seat of war there are lots of groups of combatants fighting about collateral questions, each of whom would probably declare that I have stated the case quite wrongly.

Up to this point we have been assuming that a composer, whose works we might be asked to criticise, has been abreast of the latest contemporary efforts, but of course it often happens that a composer professes to produce an example of some form of composition associated with a bygone period. How are we then to estimate the value of his work? The following considerations are, I think, useful.

A style or school of composition may become obsolete from one of two causes: first, because of its legitimate expansion into some higher type, of which it was only a rudimentary growth; or secondly, because the highest form of the style or school having been reached in it, and it having been found incapable of further development, composers have turned aside to find some entirely new channel for their thoughts. A familiar example of this last-named cause of obsoleteness will be found in the history of the madrigal, that fresh and beautiful growth of polyphony and counterpoint, when freed from the trammels of *canti fermi* and ancient modes. It blossomed, expanded, and, in the course of about a century, died. Its history is the complete life of a species. Examples of the actual completion of a musical form can be seen even in our own times. Those who have an ambition to compose oratorios are looking about in vain for some direction in which it can be legitimately expanded. As an example of a style of music which became obsolete because its outgrowth had a brighter future than the parent stock, I might point to the instrumental music which immediately preceded the rise of the sonata form or symphonic form. As you are all aware, in this early stage of modern form, second themes were often introduced in the key of the sub-dominant, a practice generally condemned now; also they were not always heard a second

time, and even when thus heard were not restored to the key of the tonic; moreover, bravura passages and rapid figures frequently filled up that portion of the movements now universally set apart for thematic development. I think we should hardly be justified in praising a composer were he to produce at this time a sonata or symphony in what was palpably a partially developed state of the now perfected form; whereas we should give unqualified praise to the author who turned out a genuine madrigal, pure both in style and construction.

But here I must return to the very point from which I started, for I can imagine a specimen of our new style of critic becoming furious, and exclaiming, "You are overlooking the real power of music, and checking its highest flights with your fetters of styles, and schools, and forms; for goodness' sake let us return to what are really first principles, and ask plainly that the only test of music shall be—Does it go straight to the heart?"

Here again, I must in the most unromantic way stop our critic by saying, that I admit at once that he has discovered the true test of beauty in music; there is only one little question to be answered, and that is, "*whose* heart is to be the test?" Here our new critic becomes highly rhetorical, and pleads that "the human heart is one; its highest and purest emotions are as readily attuned for sympathy in the heart of the peasant as of the prince." There is, I admit, a deep truth at the bottom of this, but that our music stands on a peculiar basis I can easily put to a very practical proof. At the next Monday Popular Concert let us send the audience from the upper hall down into the lower room, and fetch up the crowded audience of Christy's Minstrels to hear the classical performance upstairs. I need hardly point out how completely the magnificient appeal to nature would break down under such a test. If the new principle of criticism were correct, and if intellect and education are no longer to be factors in musical criticism, then our two audiences would be just as happy in their transferred position as before—is not the human heart one? But, as a matter of fact, the major part of the Minstrels' audience would be bored to death by the classical quartet; and as to the highly educated audience, compelled to listen to the nigger-melodies—well, they might perhaps both laugh and cry; but I think it would be discovered that they were laughing at the sentimentality, and crying at the jokes.

No, the real truth, from which it is impossible to escape, is this; the emotions and feelings are just as capable of education and training as the intellect itself; and criticism of art, and of the art of music especially, cannot possibly exist unless there is a healthy balance of the two. The critic who can appreciate only the intellectual side of music—its form, its devices, and workmanship—is just as bad a critic as the man who

boasts that he does not know the difference between a fiddle and a trombone, and never knew what was meant by key, and yet claims to label a symphony good or bad, according to his likings or dislikings. I think it must be admitted that we professed critics are sorely tempted to lean too much to the scholastic side of our art; and by doing so we blunt our emotional receptivity. You all know how beautifully this thought is expressed by George Eliot,—"In our eagerness to explain impressions, we often lose our hold of the sympathy that comprehends them."

The standard of merit in music is, and ever will be, determined by the *consensus* of that body of educated listeners and thinkers whose intellect and emotions are equally trained and refined, and who are silently elected to a sort of "board of taste." There must ever be in art, just as in morals, a right and a wrong, a good and a bad, absolutely separated and distinct from the mere pleasurable or unpleasurable.

You will see that of all this gathering of educated thinkers and feelers, the professed musical critic ought to be the most thoughtful, the most sympathetic; where others know much, he should know more; where others feel much, he should feel more. I daresay you are picturing to yourselves the poor musical critic of one of our newspapers sitting in despair, crushed by the weight of his responsibilites, lifting his hands, and muttering to himself, "Who then is equal to these things?" Cast aside this sad picture, please, at once; the proprietors of newspapers, with one or two honourable exceptions, have long ago settled this question. All that they require is pointed, epigrammatic writing, nothing more. The newspaper code of morality is of the simplest kind; it has one cardinal virtue—smart writing; it has one mortal sin—dulness. Any contributor to one of our second-rate papers who should "weight" his articles by a judicial summing-up or a reason why, would inevitably die in a workhouse. Society is the real sinner in this respect, not the poor scribbler who has to support a family. Society demands excitement in its daily-newspaper food. Naturally enough, it is supplied; hence, on the subject of art we read the most ludicrous travesties of criticism; we find for contemporary history, outrageous hints of spiteful scandal. It is rather a curious fact that some of the most notorious periodicals of this stamp should be known as "society papers." I hope "society" appreciates the compliment. There can be no doubt that we are steering through a very dangerous current of musical criticism, and it behoves everybody who is a well-wisher to the art to lend a helping hand at the wheel.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN.—Ladies and Gentlemen, I am quite sure you will agree with me in offering our very best thanks to Dr. Stainer, for his most admirable remarks on a very difficult and somewhat abstruse subject. When he announced that he was not going into any question with regard to the criticism of performers and performances, but going down to the basis of the matter of what constituted good music, and on what a critic should found his opinions, I felt at once that we had need to listen with all our ears if we wanted to follow the thread of his argument, for it would probably be rather close reasoning. I am sure we have all found it perfectly easy to follow, because Dr. Stainer has expressed himself in the most lucid manner; and while there are certainly questions on which there may be differences of opinion, we shall most of us be inclined to agree in general with the conclusions at which he has arrived. I did not come here this evening with the slightest intention of making a speech, which I am not fond of doing, and therefore you will excuse me if I say but very few words. I think, with regard to the very important question which Dr. Stainer raised as to the difference between talent and genius, there can be no doubt as to his definition of genius consisting in individuality of idea; but it is very difficult indeed—at least I speak for myself, as one of the critical profession—to tell exactly where talent ends and where genius begins, or to define any border-line between the two. Let me take the works of such a composer as Mendelssohn. I think very few would deny him the possession of genius—I certainly should not for a moment think of denying it myself—but yet there are certain of his works in which that genius is very much more fully developed than in others, and there are others comparatively so weak that, judging him merely by them, one would hardly be disposed to credit him with the possession of that faculty in the same way as we should Beethoven or Schubert, to speak of an entirely different man. I think the distinction between the two is very difficult to draw with anything like accuracy. There was another point on which Dr. Stainer spoke, and on which I shall be very much inclined to agree with him—with regard to the appreciation of new works, and the necessity of taking into consideration the years and the experience of a composer in estimating the value, say of a new symphony, or oratorio, or whatever else it may be. Some little time ago I was talking with one of my professional brethren after a concert at St. James's Hall, where some new work had just been performed, and he said to me, "What do you think of such and such a composition?" I said, "I think it shows a great deal

of promise." He said, "That is exactly the phrase I object to: you critics are always talking about a thing having a great deal of promise; what I want to see is some performance; there are a great many promises that never come to anything." That is undoubtedly the fact, but I think we should be very harsh and unjust to discourage young composers; if we see there are indications of promise, it is much better to try to encourage it, although they may never come to anything worth considering. With regard to the difference between vocal and instrumental music, and the comparative merits of the two, I think Dr. Stainer had more especial reference to the views of the Wagnerites, amongst whom many people count me one, in giving the palm to vocal music as compared with instrumental. I do not think, on the whole, one can possibly call vocal music a higher class; my own preference would certainly be in favour of instrumental as the highest abstract music—as being higher in merit, because it is entirely independent of any extraneous ideas. I am very glad he said a few words with regard to newspaper criticism, especially with regard to the attempt at smart criticism, which I am sorry to say is the bane of so much of it nowadays. If we could only get critics to criticise musical works, and talk of the music itself, rather than to speak of how Mr. A. or Mr. B. sang or played, or how badly one man conducted, or how well another conducted, I think it would be much more useful, and would do far more towards educating the public. The only real test for music must be the impression it produces, as Dr. Stainer correctly remarked, on educated people, not on the general outside public. Therefore the first duty of a critic is to endeavour to educate the public itself by dwelling more on the compositions themselves than merely on the personal merits or defects of the performers. I hope some other gentleman in the room will have something to say, for the paper has been most suggestive.

Professor MACFARREN.—I agree most cordially in any vote of thanks to the reader of the paper this evening, which I think highly intelligent, highly instructive, and most desirable for emulation. Everyone who has heard it must feel how clearly the speaker has placed many points of his subject. But it would of all things ill become a person who offers himself on all possible occasions to public criticism to state his views as to the principles by which he should be judged. He could only in such a case remind one of the story current previous to the French Revolution, when the censorship of the press prevented any expression of opinion but what first of all met the approval of the authorities; and in newspaper utterances those who wished to make their thoughts known were obliged to have recourse to caricature drawings. At that time there was a meeting summoned of the notables to decide as to the

form of taxation which should be levied on the provinces; and thereupon there was issued a caricature showing an assembly of poultry in a farm-yard, and the farmer addressing the turkeys and fowls of all descriptions, asking them to give an opinion as to the sauce with which they would prefer to be eaten. Then there was a very fine game-cock standing on a dung-hill, who said, "We do not wish to be eaten at all"; to which the farmer replied, "That is entirely beside the question." In such a case as this, namely, of any one who challenges the critics, it would be very unbecoming to state any views of his own as to how the critics should act. Most certainly his is a difficult and delicate task. Most certainly it is impossible for him to divest his judgment of prejudgment. He must feel more interested in certain personalities than others. He must go to the first hearing of a previously unknown work of a great master with a different sense and a different extent of deference from that with which he hears the composition of an entire stranger. He cannot be indifferent to the production of his own friend, and if he is peculiarly anxious to do this friend full justice with the public, he will be either more disposed to expose or else to screen his faults, if not to speak falsely about him. A sound criticism, I believe, can only be formed posthumously to the production of the work criticised. We are so completely at the mercy of all surrounding circumstances in forming a judgment on a first hearing,—nay, on a first reading—on any form of acquaintance other than mature intimacy, that I believe it is out of human power to pronounce truthfully on the merits of an unfamiliar work; and the province of the critic in this case should surely be, where faults are not overwhelming, to give a hand of encouragement, and, as Mr. Prout has told us, to look for promise. Let us have our performances when we can get them, but where there is promise let us do everything that can be done by kindly words, and by a pleasant reception, to help the composer to attain to all he hopes and strives for, and all he intends. The demarcation of genius and artistry is as impossible as to make a line between daylight and darkness. There must be twilight, and that twilight exists in the productions of the greatest masters as much as it does in the differences between one master and another. We find the dark moments in the best of writers. One may say, in this work or that work there is not the evidence of inspiration, and, not only that, there is not the evidence of workmanship which is manifest in the other works from the same source. The man who wrote, for instance, the Triple Concerto of Beethoven cannot be accused of want of genius, or want of artistry, but he cannot be admired with the same enthusiasm as he is in those brighter moments when he produced greater works. It is obvious that there are many men who do their single great work, and their many

weak ones, and if they are to be readily condemned for their weaknesses they may fail in creating the one great achievement of a long career.

Dr. CHAMPNEYS.—It is with great diffidence, Mr. Chairman, that I rise to say anything, not being a professional musician, and still less a professional critic; but the paper has suggested certain ideas to me, which I, with much humility, would wish to put before you. I think it is impossible, when reading contemporary criticism, to avoid seeing that error lies on two sides; on the one hand, on the side of those who draw up arbitrary rules, and apply them to compositions, especially to compositions which are, so to speak, rather in front of the age; and, on the other hand, on the side of those who apply everything to the test of the ear, and say this pleases, and that pleases. If we remember, with regard to such a simple thing as our ordinary senses, it is very difficult to arrive at any reason for them: for instance, tastes, sounds, and scents, are all of them either pleasant or unpleasant, partly according to our associations with them. We all remember, for instance, various nice things which we should have liked all our days if we had not had them mixed up with medicines; I do not think it would be right to say that apricot jam is nasty because we cannot bear to take it ever since we have been given powders in it. Then there are scents: we are fond of a scent which recalls a pleasant association, and we like it; it might have recalled an unpleasant association, and we should then dislike it. Leaving that on one side, we must always remember that real criticism ought to be founded on analysis and on deduction. What we really should do, I think, is this. We should take our models, and when our models have been selected, we should study the models. We should, if possible, try to find out *why* they are fine. From their common elements of beauty we should be led towards the recognition of the various facts which underlie the beautiful in music. Then contemporary criticism itself is much more difficult than dealings with the music of the past, for this reason, that we do not know in what direction music is going to develope; and the definition of fine music will eventually be something of this sort, I think,—music which will eventually appeal to those who have been brought up to admire the best models. Therefore, a critic is not only a critic of the present, but a prophet of the future. We can all remember excellent musicians who were quite unable to appreciate contemporary works—works, we will say, of the modern school, simply because they applied a Procrustean method of criticism: they say this, that, or the other is fine; these things do not conform to the model, and therefore they are bad. What they should say is this: although people, even the generally educated musicians of the present day, do not admire this, I can see,

from the progress of the history of art, the time will come when they will be appreciated, and therefore such works deserve commendation.

Major CRAWFORD.—I will only say one word to indicate one of the difficulties of criticism in music. It differs from criticism in the other arts in there being no tangible type in nature to refer it to, and that should always be taken into account. We are thrown completely on our own resources, and our own feelings and prejudices, it may be, in dealing with the matter. In sculpture and in painting you can do as Sir Joshua Reynolds tells you—you can go to nature; in music you cannot, therefore that increases the difficulties of musical criticism very considerably, and makes it far more a personal matter on the part of the critic than it otherwise would be.

Dr. STAINER.—I have very little to say in reply, because you have spoken so much more kindly of my humble efforts than I deserve. I should like to point out, however, that I purposely left out all allusions to the other arts, because I find that it leads people into such very serious difficulties and false analogies. The greater part of all books that you see now on the subject of musical criticism, or æsthetics, or whatever you choose to call it, all start off by giving you similes from sculpture and painting, and countless other things; and they lead to the opinion that the life of music is destined to be like the life of some other arts; that it will reach or has reached a very high point, and that it will have to go down hill again. That, I think you will all call to mind, was the view which kept music seriously back some time ago. The great believer in that doctrine was Dr. Crotch, who, having made up his mind that music was going to be exactly like painting, set to work to discover where music was at its very highest point; and, having done that, he settled that everything different from that was going down hill. That points very much to the valuable remarks Dr. Champneys made just now. He is evidently looking out for the ideal critic—a man who will appreciate all the present, and foresee all its relations to the future. He suggested that such a man would be a prophet, and I am very much afraid that he would come to the same untimely end as all prophets. There can be no doubt about it that the question of taking models is one of the very highest importance, so long as people will always remember that music has not gone, as far as we can judge, through any golden age, and I am not sure it will ever come to a standstill. It seems to be capable of advancement and improvement in every direction. Wherever it is produced to the end of a branch it will leave behind it a real standpoint of beauty, which will remain amongst the classics in different types and forms, as far as we know, to all time, because whatever is excellent and beautiful of its kind, whatever be the walk of

art, will, as far as we can judge, remain. I must apologise for the paper being so very short, but you all see how very large the subject is, which rendered it impossible to take up the whole of it in one paper.

The Rev. T. HELMORE proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which concluded the proceedings.

February 7, 1881.

W. H. MONK, Esq.,

In the Chair.

ON BEAUTY OF TOUCH AND TONE: AN INQUIRY INTO THE PHYSIOLOGICAL AND MECHANICAL PRINCIPLES INVOLVED IN THEIR CULTIVATION.

By A. Orlando Steed, Esq.

PART II.—THE PIANO AND ORGAN.

In most instruments the quality and variety of sound is so directly traceable to a difference in the way in which the motive power is applied, that it does seem but natural to suppose that the *timbre* of the pianoforte is amenable to similar influences. We need but listen to the first attempt of a learner to the violin, for example, to be convinced how entirely the *timbre* of the instrument is at the mercy of the performer; and although it is remarked commonly enough that beginners on the piano are not nearly so annoying to their hearers as those on most other instruments, still the unsatisfactory result of their first awkward attempts not unnaturally gives some colour to the very general impression that the actual tone of the piano depends upon the way in which the keys are struck. It is my belief, however, that this opinion is false, and that not only because by direct experiment I have myself failed to alter the *character* of the sound, *unaccompanied with a corresponding change in its intensity*, by any variety in the mode of striking the key which I could devise, but because a theoretical consideration of the matter must, I think, convince one of its utter impossibility. Thanks to the researches of Helmholtz, we are now provided with all the necessary knowledge of the principles which regulate the quality of the sounds of most musical instruments, and that of the piano has been clearly enough explained by him. I must not occupy your time by detailing the results of his researches—suffice it that every source of difference *save*

one lies entirely within the domain of the manufacturer, and just as completely without that of the performer. The shape, size, weight, and hardness of the hammer; the place at which the string is struck; the density, rigidity, and elasticity of the string—all these are matters over which the player has no control whatever. The only exception to be found lies in length of time during which the hammer remains in contact with the string, in comparison with the periodic time of the prime tone. Helmholtz shows that the upper partial tones increase in intensity according to the rapidity with which the hammer quits the string after impact. He, indeed, gives a table illustrative of this for certain notes, which presents at a glance the relative intensities of the upper partials in cases where the hammer remains touching the string during three-sevenths, three-tenths, three-fourteenths, and three-twentieths of one vibration of the lowest partial, and thence demonstrates that the natural *timbre* of the instrument varies gradually from the lowest to the highest notes of its compass. He has not adverted to the fact that the quickness of rebound in the hammer must depend upon the force with which the key is struck, nor upon its consequence, that increased richness in the upper partials will therefore be accompanied by an increase in the loudness of the sound.

The same distinguished authority has also pointed out that in proportion to the hardness and sharpness of the edge of the hammer, so will the force of the upper partial tones be augmented; and not only so, but they will actually be produced before the prime tone has had time to sound. These two hints are all which he has given towards the solution of the question before us, but from the first of them we may I think gather that the only change of *timbre* of which the piano is susceptible is concomitant with and proportioned to a change of intensity. From the latter it would appear that on pianos with hard sharp hammers sounds which are of very short duration—*i. e.*, damped in the very moment of production, will be more shrill and tinkling in their character than when their full tone is allowed to develop itself before the damper falls, while on those with very soft and broad hammers, the direct contrary will be the case.

If an alteration of the leverage of the key, a change in the weight, shape or hardness of the hammer, or a shifting in the point of contact with the string could be effected at the will of the player, then and then only could we secure a variety of *timbre*, independent of a corresponding difference of intensity; and we are thus driven to the conclusion that it is only by an excessive blow that a note of really unpleasant effect can be produced on the piano. I have indeed seen it stated that a jerky blow on the key would cause the hammer to strike the string obliquely, but that could only occur in an

instrument in which the mechanism was defective. In some of the older pianos, in which the hammer centre was too far from the string, a very slight excess of power would indeed cause the hammer to rake the string, and thus injure the tone: the facility for blocking afforded by the old actions, and the thin strings formerly used were all favourable to a deterioration of the tone when the key was struck by a careless or unskilful finger; but on the splendid models of the present day I think we may safely conclude that it is by excess of power only that the player can overstep the limits of the beautiful in tone, and that the angle at which the finger is placed upon the key is of no *direct* influence whatever upon the character of the sound.

Singers, and players on wind and stringed instruments, may to some extent evince their mastery of their art even in the production of a single sound, but unless the blow is so excessive as to produce such a clangy conglomeration of overtones as to be really disagreeable, the absolute *timbre* of a note struck by a tyro will not differ in any way from one played by a first-rate performer. Are we then at once to accede to the dictum of an eminent living pianist, who, when one of his pupils was rhapsodising upon the marvellous variety of tone in Rubinstein's playing, attributing it to the varied inclination of his fingers upon the keys, told him that he was altogether mistaken; adding "If I strike the piano with my elbow, an iron bar, or a broomstick, it will not produce the slightest difference in the tone"! In the mere sound of a single note this is undoubtedly true, but how about a combination or succession of two or more sounds? Surely it will require no highly cultured ear to distinguish, in the very simplest passage, between the playing of the beginner, the young lady who has had finishing lessons at a fashionable boarding school, the old-fashioned organist, the Rubinstein, and the elbows of the eminent pianist himself; and that not only when the effect is criticised as an attempted realisation of an artistic idea, but even as a matter of pleasurable sound alone. What then is the source of these manifest differences? I can but conclude that they are entirely the result of a more or less perfect appreciation, or, to speak more correctly, a more or less perfect control of the *subtleties* of rhythm—of rhythm in its twofold aspect of duration and intensity. Just as musical sound itself is a rhythm, depending upon the isochronous succession of its vibrations to distinguish it from mere noise; and just as its *timbre* results from the relative intensity of the partial tones of which it is composed, and from the interference with its perfect continuity by beats, and by such mechanical interruptions as are caused by the motor by which it is excited (*e.g.*, the inequalities on the hairs of a violin-bow); so that which we may speak of as the tone of the expert pianist, as distinguished from that of the novice, is the perfect

simultaneousness and equality in the chords, and the general continuity and regularity of the successive notes; while its individuality and character will be shown in the relative intensity of the various grades of accents, and in the frequency and extent of the silences by which it is interrupted. The pianist may thus be compared with the painter in monochrome, who, by his subtle control of form and of light and shade alone, is able to exemplify the varied aspects of æsthetic pleasure, and even to gratify us with no inconsiderable degree of sensuous charm.

I am well aware my opinion may be assailed on the ground that there are many players who, although their tone is eminently pleasing, are yet utterly guiltless of the power of keeping time. That, however, only goes to prove that they are deficient in regard to the coarser elements of the rhythmical principle, and not that the two things are essentially different. For my own part I am convinced that nine-tenths of the bad playing arises from the notion that "beauty of touch and tone" are a something distinct from, and which must be super-added to, the ability to keep time and mark the accent; instead of being, as I believe, absolutely bound up and included therein—as being, in short, the tactile embodiment and audible manifestation of the whole of rhythm.

This view of the matter is an evident simplification of the problem before us, which appears now to resolve itself into as easy a business as the art of fencing according to Molière: "Strike the notes at the right moment, with the right amount of force, and sustain them for the right length of time. *Voilà tout!*" If it were not for the persistency with which the little word "right" insinuates itself into every clause, the attainment of a beautiful touch would thus seem to present no great difficulties after all; and such I believe to be the case, so long as we keep clear of those which are connected with great force and extreme velocity.

Let us, however, consider the full meaning of this word "right" in each relation. It first involves a command of every degree of speed, from three or four to seven or eight hundred notes in a minute; next, according to Czerny, the control of at least a hundred degrees of loudness; and a complete mastery of every grade of cohesion and discontinuity between successive notes, from the semibreve rest to the immeasurable silences of the different shades of *staccato*, and thence to the overlapping of contiguous sounds in the slowest *legatissimo*.

I must, however, guard myself from the danger of misinterpretation concerning this comprehensive and exacting little vocable "right." Not for one moment would I have it supposed that in any one composition, or any one passage whatsoever, it is possible to indicate or to decide upon a fixed and

unalterable standard for any one of its rhythmical elements—for its loudness, its speed, its *crescendo* or *diminuendo*, its *rallentando* or *accelerando*, its *sostenuto* or its *staccato*. No dynamometer nor metronome can ever be invented which could be used as unerring guides in such matters as these. If it were possible, their employment for such a purpose would be, not simply the degradation, but the absolute destruction of all art. What I wish to imply is that the comparative beauty of touch and tone in any performance will depend upon the relativity of each note to all, and of all to each. An eminent organ-builder once told me that when he was inside one of his largest instruments, during the performance of several first-rate players one after the other, he could clearly distinguish their respective styles by simply watching the action, although the confusion of sound was too great for him to do so by the sense of hearing. I believe, indeed, that if it were possible to do for piano-players and organists what Helmholtz has done for clangs and chords—make them register their movements on a revolving cylinder or piece of smoked glass—the comparative beauty of their touch and tone would be clearly set forth in the symmetry and grace of the resulting curves.

Viewed thus comprehensively, the idea of the identity of beauty of touch and tone with perfection of rhythm is seen to cover the whole of the stupendous difficulties of modern pianism, as summed up in the word "execution"—a word of terrible import indeed when insubordinate to delicacy of gradation, and unrestrained within the lines of beauty and grace.

> And this is execution—
> All this hammering, pounding, banging?
> A kind of execution, faith,
> Almost as bad as hanging!

Happily for us, however, our present duty lies not near the Ultima Thule of pianistic possibilities, but with the consideration of the question whether the piano can be so taught as to secure to the pupil, in every step of his progress as an executant, the presence of such qualities in his playing as may fairly entitle it to be called beautiful. Judging from my own experience, I suppose that a large, though happily a decreasing, majority of teachers would answer emphatically, "No; we can teach music, meaning thereby the rudiments of notation; we can make our pupils play scales and exercises, and fantasias and sonatas; but a good touch is a gift of nature. We cannot impart taste; we cannot teach expression." This apology is not just; it is not honest; it is not true! Tell me, if you can do so truly, that your pupil is lazy, is preoccupied, is deficient in general intelligence, is nervous, is deaf, has but three fingers on each hand, has a fearfully bad

instrument to practise on; but so long as he is desirous of learning, and troubled with no physical, moral, nor circumstantial disqualification, you must not tell me that you cannot make him play music of moderate difficulty with the sensuous charm appertaining to the correct rhythmisation of the chords and passages of which it is composed, and with the *intrinsic* expression which it demands.

In a leader which appeared in the *Times* towards the end of June, 1879, it was argued that, as a result of Marshall Hall's discovery of the reflex action of the nerves, and of the further discovery of the physiology of memory, we might hope to obtain the same certainty of result in mental training which we now look for from the gymnastic exercise of the muscles. If this be true, as I most fully believe it to be, in purely intellectual pursuits, how much more so must it be in such a thing as piano-playing? We need not, we must not, ignore the undoubted truth that great achievements of any kind demand not only right and sufficient training, but depend far more on natural predisposition. Nor need we, nor must we, admit, spite of the present paucity of result in proportion to the machinery employed, that there is anything to prevent any one of ordinary general abilities from attaining to a very respectable proficiency in this or any other *mechanical art* which he may wish to acquire. The fact is that we musicians are rather apt to take somewhat too high a view of the nature of our calling—are rather too fond of attributing to genius and inspiration things which are, after all, mere matters of natural cause and effect. We run down what we are pleased to call mechanical playing, and, instead of regarding expression as a term indicative of the realisation of the intrinsic meaning and effect of a composition by carrying out the ordinary laws of matter and motion, must needs consider it as non-existent unless it evidently proceeds from an emotional impulse. Expression does not mean the *impression* of one's own individuality upon the work, but the showing forth, the pressing out, of the rhythm inherent in the work.

But if I thus persistently proclaim my conviction of the general attainability of good tone by pupils unendowed with special gifts, I may of course be fairly challenged to show, by something more than vague generalities, by actual and explicit directions, how it is to be done. I reply, we must ourselves realize that it depends entirely upon rhythm—upon rhythm in its totality; that not only must the keys be struck at the right moment, with the right amount of force, but they must be held down during the exact value of the note. We must give up the idea that the organ is an instrument on which the sounds must be sustained for their full length, but that on the piano it is not so important. *The fall of the damper is a more accurate test of true playing than is the blow of the hammer.* We

must at once give up teaching a percussive and disconnected and ungraded style of play—that tip, tip, tapping which frets the nerves of the hand, jars upon the ear, and irritates the whole nature by its irregular discontinuities, and by its helpless want of relativity between the successive sounds. We must cultivate from the very first a pressure-touch, continuity of sound, gradation of tone, and thus enlist both hearing and feeling as our allies. We must become trainers rather than teachers, not only telling and showing our pupils what they ought to do, but *seeing that they do it.* There must be no more trusting to taste or ear. The tasks must be of the simplest; and the brightest, as well as the slowest, pupils must do the same kind of work, although the clever ones may be let off with less of each grade. We must think more of skill and less of knowledge. The ability to play a slow shake perfectly is of infinitely more value to a pianist than even the knowledge of the key in which a piece is written. We must not despise the day of small things, but must look upon the correct performance, by *one hand alone*, of a little tune consisting of long equal notes lying within the compass of a fifth, or even less, as worthy of being commended as a really artistic achievement. The most rigid accuracy both as to duration and tone must be insisted on from the very first. Sight, touch, and hearing must alike co-operate for this end. There must be no prohibition of looking at the fingers, though of course, when that aid can be dispensed with, due praise should be given. The dissonance arising from the percussion of a note while another is still sounding must be imperatively forbidden, nay, the purity of consonant intervals must be equally insisted on. No trouble can be too great to keep the ear sensitive to the disagreeable effect of this most common fault, and the *fingers aware of its perpetration.* The least break between adjoining sounds must be promptly corrected, nor must the slightest inequality in the strength of the sound be permitted, or at any rate passed by unnoticed. The exercises should be confined to such a region of the compass of the instrument that the after-vibration may be sufficiently strong to enable these defects to be readily appreciated.

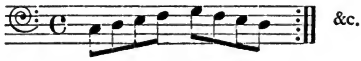
But, on the other hand, the student's attention must not be diverted by any complication of difficulties. The counting should be done by the teacher, should be rigidly accurate in time, and the accents should be indicated by a proportionate stress of the voice.

The old-fashioned fixed-hand exercise, in which some of the fingers are silently placed on the keys, and held down while one repeats the same sound, should be introduced at the first lesson, but, instead of the usual way of playing them, I would suggest that each note should be held down for a definite period, say four beats, and be separated from its successor by a

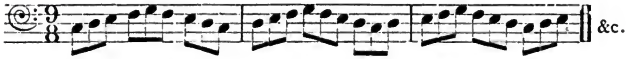
clear rest of the same length, to accustom the pupil to a distinction which many an *accomplished* player is unaware of—the difference between sound and silence, between contact and non-contact of the fingers and the key. This is indeed the exercise which I invariably give first of all to those *advanced* performers who, in cant phrase, can play anything you can put before them, and only want a few finishing lessons.

When these fixed-hand exercises are played without definite rests the finger almost invariably remains in the air much longer than it does upon the key. It is most important that it should be raised and lowered with the greatest rapidity, so as to reduce the break between the sounds to the least possible length.

As soon as a fair control is acquired over equality of tone in long sounds—the straight lines of music—the young player should be promoted to the pot-hook and hangers—the lines of beauty and grace—by studying the simplest alternations of accent. In every kind of exercise care should be taken to arrange them in such a form as to prevent the continued recurrence of the accents upon the same finger. Thus, the ordinary five-finger exercise should frequently be played in triplets.



should often give place to—



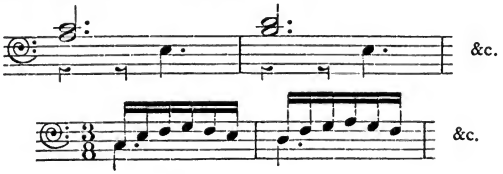
In like manner the scales and arpeggios should be played with every variety of rhythmical device. For instance, through three or five octaves in groups of four, or in any number of octaves in threes; sometimes even in unequal notes, as alternate crotchets and quavers in nine-eight time. Many excellent directions on this subject are to be found in Franklin Taylor's "Primer"; and, as I had systematically taught in this way for many years before that excellent work appeared, I can speak with confidence as to its utility.

At a very early stage the black notes should be used; when this is done the so-called remote keys lose half their terrors. Never teach two scales having the same fingering one after the other: it only renders the conquest of a dissimilar fingering more difficult.

The combined use of the hands should be deferred until a very fair control over their separate action has been gained; and when their simultaneous use is thus justified we must in every way discourage the formation of any artificial sympathy between them. So important do I feel this rule, that I seldom or never allow the scales to be practised in octaves until they have been learnt in sixths and tenths. Although perfect equality of tone in the two hands must be attained, we must not neglect to vary the pressure, so as to make sometimes the bass, at others the treble, predominant. No matter what the form of the exercise, the spirit of delicate rhythm must pervade it through and through. In short, everything must be done to concentrate the pupil's attention upon his task, and to prevent that "deadly dexterity of hand" which Mr. Ruskin so strongly condemns; in music, as in drawing, "the true performance of *detail* being for evermore impossible to a hand which has contracted a *habit* of execution." But when a fair control over distinctly rhythmical scales and passages is acquired, we may then with little trouble perform them in the traditional and characterless manner, which also has its value: *e.g.*, when they are used as mere embellishments; but when, as in most classical works, they enter into the very substance of the composition, they must participate in its characteristic rhythmisation.

Mr. Ellis has shown us to what a subtle nicety it is possible to educate the ear to the perception of shades of pitch; and the pianoforte teacher must endeavour to awaken in his pupil the same keen appreciation of intensity of tone, pressure of finger, minute differences of duration; in short, he must be absolutely saturated with sense and power of rhythm.

With the use of double notes and chords, and especially when polyphonic music is attempted, redoubled attention will be needed to enforce a perfect accuracy in the length of the sounds. This is *the* test of true craftsmanship. But with very young pupils it only requires patience and determination on the part of the teacher to become a second nature of the player, who soon gets to realise and to dislike the loss of sonority in such passages as these, when the sustained sounds are robbed of the slightest fraction of their true value, and equally to detest the ill effect of the overlapping of the moving notes when one is sustained beyond its proper time:—



Both Czerny and Lebert and Stark say, in regard to connected thirds: "In passing the fingers over and under each other perfect connection is impossible, but it suffices, if in the ascending scale the upper note be connected, in the descending scale the lower one." With all due deference to such distinguished teachers, I must submit that to an acute ear this method is horrible, and that a slight break in both parts, which, if adroitly made, will be hardly perceptible, is infinitely preferable to their plan.

I must apologise for lingering so long over this division of my subject, but having, during five-and-twenty years' experience as a teacher, met with not more than five pupils if indeed so many, who had ever been told the importance of perfect accuracy in regard to duration, and of delicacy of gradation in respect to accent, I feel that too much insistence can scarcely be bestowed on a matter which lies at the very root of beautiful effect in music.

If it be conceded that tone in pianism is really nothing more than justly-varied rhythm, the question very naturally arises as to the reason for the great changes of angle, and of elevation in arm, and hand, and fingers, which are witnessed in the performances of so many of the greatest players. Are they merely assumed to bewilder and astonish the eyes of the spectator, or are they *bonâ fide* means whereby their enormous volume of sound, their delicate *pianissimo*, their subtle gradation of tone, their refined phrasing, are produced? The almost universal concurrence among authors in enforcing some one or other position of the hands, as being the one thing needful for the formation of a good touch, certainly points to the former proposition as at least probable; but this probability is somewhat shaken when *their* very various notions as to what constitutes the right position are compared. A most instructive and amusing instance of "doctors differing" would be afforded if time would permit me to lay before you only a tithe of their conflicting views. A consideration of certain points in regard to the construction and functions of the hand will be a more direct method of solving the question than any comparison of the conflicting dogmas of equally eminent authorities.

The first point is, that the hand is not only a mechanical agent consisting of levers and pulleys—in other words, of bones and muscles—through which we are enabled to exercise our will upon things without us, but that it is the chief seat of the sense of touch, which, so far as our inquiry is concerned, consists of two functions, viz., simple sense of contact and what is commonly called the muscular consciousness, by which we judge of the amount and direction of forces exercised by ourselves independently of actual touch of any external substance; and, in connection with the former, to estimate the resistance which the thing acted upon offers.

I am strongly inclined to believe that it is to the neglect of the cultivation of these sensibilities in the hand, consequent upon the excessive desire for strength and velocity, that the lack of really charming players is chiefly due. *We think too much about what we do to the keys, and too little about what they do to us*, not reflecting that the performance of the second or any subsequent motion must be largely influenced by the amount of resistance which has been overcome in the former; and thus we sacrifice a most potent means for securing the very central feature of beauty of touch and tone, *subtlety of gradation.*

It is evident, therefore, that no directions for attaining the best or any right position of the hand in playing can be regarded as authoritative in which no account is taken of the superior sensitiveness of some parts of the hand. And yet, although our books of instruction teem with directions as to the position and action of the hand and fingers, I cannot at the present moment remember one in which a single hint is given that touch on the piano is even remotely connected with *feeling*. Of course I now use the word feeling as meaning *sensation in the fingers*, and not as a synonym for emotion or expression.

Nor must consideration of leverage be ignored; for even if the brute force of a fairly developed hand be ordinarily in excess of any demand which may be made upon it for obtaining mere loudness, whatever the position in which we may elect to hold it, the exertion of that force will require a greater exercise of the will—in other words, of nerve-power—in some positions than in others; and thus, by varying the position, we gain a most subtle gauge by which to regulate the strength of the stroke.

Then again, the rapidity with which a finger can be withdrawn from a key—a matter of great importance, since upon it depends the degree of cohesion, or of separation between successive sounds—is also a matter of leverage. The fleshy covering of the bones, too, although nowhere so rigid as either "a bar of iron or a broomstick," varies greatly both in thickness and elasticity, and thus becomes a factor in regard to promptitude both of attack and cessation.

Remembering that it is just where the flesh is thickest and most elastic on the top joint of the fingers: viz., at those circle-like places somewhere about the middle of the lower surface, that the power of sensation is greatest, let us examine somewhat in detail the different degrees of pressure which we are able to exert in a downward direction by varying the disposition of the leverage of the fingers.

A very simple experiment with an ordinary balance will enable any one to judge of the extent of this variation. In my own case, I find that with a really flat position of the middle

finger I can obtain a pressure of between six and seven pounds; with the first joint kept perfectly horizontal, in a straight line with the back of the hand, and with the two upper joints at right angles with it, between nine and ten pounds; with the three joints about equally curved, and the tip resting on the lever, about thirteen pounds; and with the back of the hand raised, the first joint slightly slanting downwards, the second joint nearly perpendicular, and the third joint somewhat thrown back, so as to bring the centre nearly upon the lever, the weight lifted was more than sixteen pounds. Both the lightest and the heaviest being thus actuated at a point either upon or very close to the centre of sensation, and proving that the greatest range of varying pressures can be obtained without resorting to the tip-touch, as is commonly thought necessary when great strength is required. Nor was the stiffening of the arm and wrist so much needed to reinforce the intrinsic strength of the fingers in the first and last cases as in the second and third; or, at any rate, I was not so conscious of it. Of course in each case there was considerable co-operation of the arm with the finger, or these great weights could not have been overcome.

The height from which a finger falls is commonly supposed to add greatly to the amount of sound; but if the hand itself be kept at exactly the same level and quite still, and the most forcible, *i.e.*, the most rapid blow be given—first, with the finger resting upon the surface of the key, and then from the highest position to which it can under the circumstances be brought—it will be found that the augmentation of tone is not nearly so great as might be imagined, but that, in order to obtain any manifest increase of tone from the higher blow, the weight of the hand must in some degree be added to that of the finger. This, while it explains the uniform practice of the older players of keeping the hand as still as possible, and scarcely raising the fingers above the keys, does not exclude the height to which they are raised, even while the hand remains perfectly still, from exercising a very marked influence on the effect of a passage, since the effort to withdraw them to a greater distance will involve an appreciable, although an immeasurable, shortening of the sound, and thus impart a greater distinctness of tone, *i.e.*, a greater brilliancy to the passage.

Such considerations as these, which might be multiplied indefinitely, all point to the immense changes in the rhythmical texture of the performances by such alterations in the way of striking the keys as continually occur in the play of the best artists, and should make us chary of prescribing any one position or any one kind of touch as the best. They are all best when rightly applied.

The order in which the master will direct them to be

cultivated by the student will doubtless depend more or less upon the view which he takes of the piano as an instrument, and upon his predilections in the matter of music.

The admirer of light and sparkling pieces will make him begin with something like Frost's Thalbergian Exercises, which require a loose *staccato* touch; an expert executant will inculcate a firm blow with the hard tip of the finger as the foundation for a brilliant style, since the hammer will act with greater promptitude, and the damper fall more rapidly, when the key is so struck than when it is pressed by the soft lower surface; while the lover of a pure singing tone, preferring volume to intensity, and delicate gradation to noise, will agree with Mr. Charles Lunn, that it is through the velvety cushions of the top joint of the finger that he "can best display his feeling, and show that he knows to the full the cunning of a man's right hand." He will therefore recommend a somewhat more flattened position than that usually taught as being the best for a beginner; for the more highly sensitive the part of the finger applied to the key, the more minutely will the player be able to regulate its momentum. And if he be wrong, he will certainly err in good company. We are told in Grove's Dictionary that "Beethoven's fingers were short and strong, and the tips broad, as if *pressed out* with long practising in early youth," and he is reported to have said that in playing an *adagio* the fingers should feel as if glued to the keys. Has not Mr. Ruskin also said, "The only rule which I have as yet found to be without exception respecting art is, that all great art is delicate"?

The teacher, however, whose first desire is not for the gratification of his personal likings, will not neglect to study the idiosyncrasy of his pupil and the natural conformation of his hand before insisting too strongly on this or that position as the one to train for; and towards young children especially he will observe the greatest tenderness in his requirements, so that their delicate and loosely-strung fingers may not be injured, nor any false position induced, by making them strike too hard, press too heavily, or stretch too far.

Mr. Charles Hallé's directions are very simple, but I question if they are not ample for a beginner: "The hand must be kept in an easy and natural position, the thumb as well as the fingers over the keyboard, and the elbows near, but not touching, the sides. The key must be struck with the *fleshy* part of the finger, the motion of the hand from the wrist, and each finger must be raised exactly at the moment when the next one touches the key, and not before, except in *staccato* playing." *The easy and natural position* I take to be that gracefully rounded form which the tonicity of the muscles causes the hand to assume when quietly hanging at the side,

which only requires a slight separation of the fingers to adapt it to every requirement of the five-finger position.

The indissoluble concomitance of *timbre* with intensity, and its natural variation throughout the compass of the piano, are a continual source of danger to the unpractised performer, since they add to the obtrusiveness of a sound when it is inadvertently played too loud; but they are the means by which we can obtain, more fully than would be possible if the piano were really "monochrome," the well-known charming effect so happily designated by Thalberg as "The Art of Singing applied to the Piano"; and they also conduce to what is called orchestral colouring. This latter is, however, very greatly caused by the configuration of the passages themselves, aided, in the hearer's imagination, by their association with the instrument for which they were written. But beyond this, each orchestral instrument has its own peculiar attack, and its own possibilities of phrasing; and it is upon catching these features, and not upon any near simulation of their *timbre*, that the pianist depends when attempting to suggest them. Then, again, the compass of each is limited to but a small extent of the keyboard, and their most characteristic notes are still further restricted to a portion only of their own compass. So that, by combining the pitch, the attack, the phrasing, and the configuration of the passage, a fair indication of the instrument intended may indeed be afforded by a skilful player. But here again everything depending upon the player is evidently and entirely a matter of rhythm.

The use of mechanical aids by the student has been often enough discussed from the point of view of increasing the strength and suppleness of the fingers and securing the right position of the hand and arm; but, so far as I am aware, they have never been regarded as directly bearing upon the production of a beautiful tone. Many very eminent authorities are strongly opposed to them altogether, but I think their objections are based on the abuses incident to them as to every other useful thing.

Having regard to the rhythmical origin of beauty in touch and tone, I am inclined to place the metronome first in the order of utility. Its employment during the practice of technical exercises and troublesome passages is invaluable, to prevent that hurrying to which ardent and nervous pupils are addicted. I do not believe that it conduces to a square and uninteresting style of playing when used under the direction of a teacher whose own rhythmical feeling is refined and pure; and old Dr. Crotch's dictum, that "our first duty is to learn how to play in time, our second how to play out of time," is worth remembering.

Next to the metronome comes the organ, or, when that is not accessible, the harmonium, which is especially valuable

for those pupils who, having made a certain progress in music, fail in the true *legato* touch. The unreasoning prejudice, not yet wholly extinct, that its practice prevents anyone from acquiring a good touch on the piano, is simply absurd. That many organists of the old school had a most detestable touch when they attempted to play the piano is undeniable, but that naturally resulted from their want of practice on the latter, and from their monotonous and unrhythmical style upon the former. The advice of Schumann to young musicians on this subject will probably occur to many of my hearers, who will doubtless also call to mind the names of many eminent performers who were or are equally excellent on both instruments.

The perfect *sostenuto* of which the organ is capable renders it simply invaluable to the piano teacher, the more so since, while the insisting upon rigorous accuracy of touch may, in consequence of the evanescent sound of the piano, seem to the unreflecting pupil as savouring of pedantic tyranny, its necessity on the organ is self-evident to the least sensitive of ears.

The notion that it is not amenable to variety of touch, that phrasing is impracticable upon it, unfortunately lingers still in some *not* out-of-the-way places, though its erroneousness would, one might suppose, reveal itself at the first thought, on comparing the difference of style observable between two players—a difference wholly independent of speed and of registering. This will be found to depend mainly upon the distinctness with which repeated notes and chords are articulated, upon the slight variation in the length of silence by which succeeding phrases are separated, and also upon a minute lengthening of the accented parts of the bar, occasioned partly by a greater promptitude in the attack, and partly by an infinitesimal lingering of the finger upon the key. The interchange in the effects of duration and loudness may be easily shown by playing a scale slightly out of time, when, if the unaccented notes are made the tiniest shade too long, they will, except to a very observant ear, appear as if they were really a little louder than the others.

The performance of mechanical exercises upon the table, or upon a heavily weighted dumb keyboard, so strongly advocated by some professors, and so strongly condemned by others, while it undoubtedly tends to strengthen the muscles, may also be made to increase the sense of contact and the muscular sense of the hand; but, as it is only by concentrated attention that any good can be effected in this way, it should not be attempted, except under the direct supervision of the master, by any but the most conscientious of pupils.

I should be glad if any of my hearers can inform me certainly if there is any truth in a statement I once read, that Thalberg used when travelling to practise upon a dumb piano.

The system of finger-gymnastics invented by Mr. Jackson has already formed the subject of an admirable paper by Mr. Stratton, but I should like to recommend a new work, entitled "A Complete Course of Wrist and Finger Gymnastics," by A. Leffler Arnim. The exercises therein are divided into three classes—active, duplicate, and passive. "The active are those which are carried out without the intervention of an opposite will or force," and correspond in some degree with the "free exercises" of Mr. Jackson. "The passive manipulations are those which are applied by one hand to the other, the latter being in a state of entire passivity. They are mainly useful in rendering the fingers lithesome, and the joints mobile." The duplicate exercises are so called "because they can only be effected by the working of two opposing wills—the one acting, the other resisting." These are very valuable as means for improving the action of any particular muscle, and because they cannot but tend to the development of the muscular consciousness when attentively practised.

In conclusion, I must say how utterly inadequate I feel my treatment of this subject to have been. A volume would scarcely suffice for its due consideration; and, in preparing this paper, my chief difficulty has been what to select and what to reject from the great amount of material I had accumulated, so as to bring it within reasonable limits. I thank you most heartily for your kind attention to my crotchets, and trust that their monotonous rhythm will now be agreeably varied by some notes of greater value from other speakers. If I may add one word more, I would say to young musicians and young teachers, "Take care of the time and the touch, and the tone will take care of itself."

DISCUSSION.

The Chairman.—Ladies and gentlemen, if you will allow me, I will in your behalf present Mr. Steed with our thanks for his excellent paper. In the next place, it is my duty as Chairman to promote discussion on it—often quite as valuable as the paper itself, and which, I think, it is most important that our little Society should keep in mind. It is sometimes a little difficult to raise. In the first place, the reader of the paper has the advantage of preparation, which the speaker in discussion has not; but I hope there may still be some amongst us who, from technical knowledge of this particular subject, may be willing to make an observation or two of value. One of our friends, Mr. Ellis, has been mentioned more than once; then, I think, we should have some observa-

tions from those amongst us who are more particularly accustomed to the pleasant task of pianoforte-teaching; and I am very sorry Mr. Osborne is not here, as he might have something to say. It is a matter extremely interesting to many, and the observations made as to the difference of touch between the pianoforte and organ are at the present time specially so. Twenty-five years ago, notably before the time of the Great Exhibition in London, the touch of the organ was a most inconvenient and heavy matter, but we have had many improvements in its manipulation, consequent on the improvements of manufacturers, and I do not think these exhausted, or likely to be. I now cordially invite you to the discussion, and I hope we shall profit by it.

Mr. W. H. Cummings.—It seems a great pity we should not have something said on this occasion; and I think it only wants a few words to start those who know something about playing the pianoforte. One thing struck me as very important, namely, the question whether it is advisable for pianists to practise the organ. I know there is still a theory, which is very much in vogue, that it is a very bad thing for pianists to do so, but I think that arises possibly, and has some true cause in the fact, that organs, even with all the improvements spoken of—all the improved manipulations spoken of: the pneumatic action, and so on—are terribly unequal in the touch. You cannot go into a single church in London, or very few, at any rate—perhaps St. Paul's or the Temple Church, and it may be one more—where you will find a touch which is equal. I find the bass generally heavier than the middle of the instrument, and considerably heavier than the top, and consequently that must be a disadvantage in practising the organ. It is quite clear that cannot be a good thing for the fingers of an organist or pianist, particularly those who play the rapid music in vogue at the present day. Mr. Steed asked just now if anyone could speak as to the alleged fact of Thalberg having practised on a dumb pianoforte. I cannot speak from direct knowledge, but I have travelled with Arabella Goddard, and found her using a dumb pianoforte, or a key-board; and on talking with her about the advantage of using it, she told me that Thalberg used the same thing—so that that is a sort of second-hand evidence, at any rate. I think some of the lady members might speak on this matter. There are some admirable pianists here, and we might have some good criticism from them. We are much obliged to Mr. Steed for his paper, and I only wish that, as it is not very long, he had given it to us a little slower.

The Chairman.—It would indeed be a bright day for this Association if some of our lady friends would set the example of speaking. I have lately had the pleasure myself in another place of hearing some uncommonly good speaking on the

part of ladies, and I think it would be most refreshing to us here.

Mr. CHARLES GARDINER.—I must say that I feel that the personal feelings of the performer affect the tone very much. I should go rather beyond our lecturer this evening. I have been delighted with a great many things he has said, but I believe that the feeling of the performer does influence the tone.

The CHAIRMAN.—You mean not the mechanical feeling, but the emotional feeling.

Mr. GARDINER.—The emotional feeling. I may mention an instance which just occurs to my mind. I have been giving a lesson to a pupil on a piece which I have not heard her play for a long time—the "Arabesque" of Schumann. She did not seem to play it as well as before, and I said, "It seems a curious term to use, but you appear to play this afternoon in a flippant style." She looked up with great surprise, and said, "Well, it is very strange, but I was playing to some one last night, and he used that same expression; he said there was a flippancy about it." I thought there must have been something about the character of the touch that produced on two listeners the effect of flippancy. Comparisons have been drawn between pianoforte playing and organ playing, and the question has been propounded whether organ playing is good for pianists. The lecturer seemed to consider that it ought to lead to a very *legato* touch; but I think the experience of many rather proves the contrary, because if a pupil practised the organ a great deal, there is a great necessity for holding the notes down, but, when they come to the pianoforte, many feel that is not carried out; that is, those who practise the organ do not pay that attention you expect on returning to the pianoforte.

Dr. F. E. GLADSTONE.—I did not intend to say anything this evening, and I have really very little to say, because it has been already suggested that the reader of the paper knows so much more about the subject than anyone else, having studied it so recently. But there is one point, I think, on which a little evidence may be forthcoming, that is, with regard to the advantage or disadvantage of practising the organ in connection with the pianoforte. I was, as some of you may be aware, pupil of the late Dr. Wesley, and for five years he was the pupil of the late John Cramer. Dr. Wesley was brought up, in his early days, at a time when the organ touch was very heavy indeed, long before pneumatics were invented, and yet he had one of the most lovely touches on the pianoforte I ever heard. I believe he had imbibed that from his instructor, John Cramer, but I must say I think it had undoubtedly much to do with the advantage of practising the organ, which he had enjoyed from his boyhood. I must say

myself, as far as my experience goes, that steady practice with the organ in connection with the pianoforte tends to give a better *legato* touch than can be obtained in any other way. That is the result with regard to my own experience.

Mr. SOUTHGATE.—There is one remark which I might offer with regard to the practice of the organ. It must be remarked that, unlike the pianoforte, the organ is an instrument on which you cannot get accent, and I need hardly point out how necessary it is on the pianoforte to get good accent. I think if people practise too much on the organ, there is a little danger of losing one of the greatest charms of the pianoforte —the accent. On the harmonium, accent may be obtained by the expression stop, but that is, as you know, obtained in a totally different way, namely, by means of the foot. It is an important thing, which should not be lost sight of, that accent is the life and soul of good pianoforte playing; and the continued practice on the organ is hardly calculated, I think, to improve that.

Mr. STEED.—I am much obliged to my friend, Mr. Cummings, for giving me the information, which he calls second-hand, but it was quite as good as first-hand in his case, with regard to Thalberg practising on the dumb piano. I believe it is sometimes of immense importance if, as I said, you can only secure that the pupil is conscientious in the use of it. As to my speaking too fast, I am certainly conscious of it; but my friend, Mr. Higgs, suggested that the paper should not be too long, in order that we might have a good discussion after it, and therefore I was anxious to get through it in order that we might have a little chat on the subject we are all interested in. I most distinctly assert still that in a single, an isolated note, no possible difference of *timbre* can be produced by the way in which the finger touches the key. I am perfectly certain that had my assertion on that point not been true Mr. Ellis would have contradicted me. I was very glad to find that he was here, and did not contradict me. I only wish I could believe that the touch of the finger could directly influence the tone, for it would greatly strengthen my argument for the necessity of cultivating the consciousness and sensibility of the finger-tips; but, as I laid down in the paper, the touch has an enormous influence on the collective tone of the passage, and it is that which, I think, well explains the expression with regard to the flippancy of a certain lady's playing. It is a remark I have frequently made, "You play that in a flippant manner." The effect would be shown in a passage, but it would not be shown in an individual note. What I contend for is this—that in teaching touch we simply teach rhythm, and nothing more. I have had very favourable experience with regard to the harmonium and organ in order to supplement my pianoforte

teaching; and if you will bear with me a moment I will relate a little anecdote with regard to one of my pupils. She was certainly very clever, but had been wretchedly taught, and had not the slightest idea of *legato* in her playing. She was about fourteen or fifteen. I tried everything I knew in order to interest her in tone on the piano, and at last I told her father that unless he got a harmonium for her to practise upon I did not know what in the world to do with her, and I should be obliged to give her up. I felt that she was doing me discredit, and that I was robbing him of his money. He consulted a musical friend of his, a gentleman who had previously been a solo violinist, and who was connected with a well-known professional musical family in London. He said, "It is simply absurd, the idea of any good coming out of practising the harmonium. I then told her father, "The fact is, I shall have to give up teaching your daughter." He said, "If it comes to that, it looks honest; and I will get a harmonium, for a time, at any rate." About three months after the harmonium was obtained this gentleman visited them again, and he asked her to play to him. She went to the piano and played, and he said, "How much you have improved!" adding, "I knew it was all nonsense about your learning the harmonium"; but she replied, "I have not touched the piano for the last three months." The names, eminent in art, of professors who have been equally celebrated both as pianists and organists, point, I think, to the fact that what I have contended for, a judicious practice of the organ, does not tend to spoil the pianoforte touch. With regard to the organ being stiffer in the bass than the treble, that is always true, I believe, in the case of grand pianofortes also. I do not say that long continued practice on the organ is advisable; I think, myself, if you give all your attention, or a greater part of it, to one thing, it will necessarily lessen, to a certain extent, your power on the other. I may mention that some years ago Dr. Steggall said to me, "Come to church with me on Christmas morning, Bennett and I are going to play 'For unto us' as a duet." I went and heard it, and afterwards I said to Dr. Steggall, "I did not know that Bennett was an organist"; and he said, "No, neither was he, as a pedalist, but his perfection of pianoforte-playing enabled him to overcome the manual difficulties of the organ." I very much regret that further discussion has not taken place on other points, for I feel certain that many gentlemen present, and ladies too, would be able to throw some light on the angles at which it is advisable to play certain passages. I have rather heterodox notions on the subject myself—at least, different from those laid down in instruction books; and, had I not been afraid of trespassing too long on the patience of my hearers, I should have introduced more of them. I think, if I may be allowed to say so,

we ought not to separate without proposing a vote of thanks to Professor Monk for the kind way in which he has presided at this meeting.

The CHAIRMAN.—I am much obliged to you, ladies and gentlemen. It seems to me there is a tolerable consensus of opinion on the part of the best pianoforte professors as to the desirability of some knowledge and practice of organ touch as a means for obtaining *legato* playing. I might mention, as the gentleman is not here, nor, I believe, is he a member of our Association, that one of my daughters was for some years a pupil of Mr. Aguilar, one of our best pianoforte teachers; and, much to my astonishment (he happened to know that I had an organ in my house), he strongly advised his pupil to practise the organ. Simply conceding the point in the way in which Mr. Gardiner, and Dr. Gladstone also, conceded it, with regard to inequality of touch on the different parts of the keyboard in organs, of course in some organs this inequality is very great. Taking an average organ, I rather question if the inequality itself might not be called valuable in the education of the hand. Again, it is a most interesting question, Is there such a thing, or is there not, as accent on the organ manual? I am inclined to answer that question in the affirmative, especially taking our modern organs. We may certainly congratulate ourselves that the mere mechanical improvement of the organ within our time has rendered phrasing possible of which our forefathers could not have dreamt, and for this we are very much indebted to the organ builder. Then, again, with regard to the curious question as to touch. Mr. Steed has laid down that nothing can be done with the hand itself as regards the production of tone on the pianoforte—I think that is what you said.

Mr. STEED.—With regard to an individual note, the *timbre* varies only as the *intensity* varies. The point I wish particularly to emphasise is that the whole thing is matter of rhythm —appreciation of rhythm, and power of rhythm—and especially also I drew attention to the raising of the finger—that is, the fall of the damper, as being the criterion of a good touch—as a measurement of the silences which intervene between successive notes; that is probably the most important feature in what I should call the collective tone of a passage, and will most certainly be influenced by the elevation of the finger. I hope the discussion will be continued if there is anything more to be said against my views.

Major McCREAGH.—Once or twice in St. James's Hall I have heard players of great reputation; and when hearing one man I have thought, What a wretched piano that is! and I have condemned the piano; but shortly afterwards I have heard somebody else, and one found that the fault could not be in the

piano, for it sounded like a totally different instrument; yet both pianists were of high reputation.

Mr. STEED.—I have noticed the same thing. Not long ago I heard a concert at a certain Hall not far from this place, and during the whole of one afternoon my ears were positively raked by the horribly dissonant way in which the piano sounded. Yet what was the cause? There was no *sostenuto*, there was no gradation, the whole thing resolved itself into a matter of thump, thump, bang, bang, from beginning to end. There was not a touch of music or rhythm in the whole thing. It was not the fault of the piano, but the player.

The CHAIRMAN.—I suppose you would send him to the organ.

Mr. STEED.—No, I do not think I should; I should send *him* to a very light pianoforte, and make him play softly, and with minute attention to rhythmical gradation.

March 7, 1881.

EBENEZER PROUT, Esq., B.A.,

In the Chair.

INTRODUCTORY TO THE STUDY OF WAGNER'S COMIC OPERA, "DIE MEISTERSINGER VON NÜRNBERG."

By C. A. Barry, Esq., M.A.

It is not many years since Wagner was frequently spoken of by his friends as the "best-abused musician in Europe." And so he was; for in almost any circle of musicians mention of his name acted like a red rag upon a bull, and gave rise to all kinds of invectives. Happily for himself and his admirers, he has lived down prejudice, and certainly may now be regarded as the best protected, if not also the best paid among living composers. Throughout the civilised world his works have evoked a far larger amount of attention than those of any other composer have ever done during his lifetime. The interest in them may therefore be regarded as universal. Indeed, thus much has been admitted even by the most determined of his opponents. Under these circumstances I feel that I need not apologise, as I should have had to have done some few years ago, for having made choice of one of Wagner's operas as a subject to bring before the Musical Association. My excuse, if an excuse be needed, for giving the preference to "Die Meistersinger," rests on the fact of its being one of those of Wagner's operas which have not yet been performed in this country, and on the good probability there seems to be of its being brought to a hearing in London at no distant date.

Of Wagner generally it may be said that with him opera is a serious undertaking, differing from opera in general much in the same way as a Shakespeare play may be said to differ from a modern farce, and therefore is not to be regarded in the light of a relaxation to be sought after the day's toil is over, but rather as an earnest study, involving some fore-knowledge of the subjects treated. That this should be so

is not surprising, when we consider that the task which Wagner assigned himself was nothing less than the entire regeneration of opera, and the establishment of a national music-drama in its place. To this he was led by the feeling that opera, as it had hitherto existed in Germany, was neither more nor less than a base copy of the French and Italian schools, and therefore destitute of all national characteristics. The regeneration and nationalisation of opera he hopes to attain not alone by the example he has himself set of composing music-dramas, but also by utilising the Bayreuth theatre from time to time for grand musical dramatic festivals, at which opportunities may be afforded to composers of bringing their new works to a hearing, which under ordinary circumstances would not be accorded elsewhere.

Taking into account the solid and interesting nature of the poetic material upon which he has drawn for the subjects of his dramas, the earnest, highly original and astonishingly powerful manner in which—presenting as he does the singular phenomenon of one doubly endowed, both as poet and musician—he has treated them, their superiority over the *libretti* of the operas of the past has readily been acknowledged. Collaterally with the music, their poetic material alone opens out a vast field for study. In proof of this it seems almost sufficient to quote their titles. A word or two, however, by way of illustration, may not be out of place.

With "Rienzi," the first to meet with general acceptance in Germany, there is no difficulty, for it is founded upon Bulwer Lytton's novel, which, together with the history of the stirring times of which it treats, is open to all to read.

With his subsequent works, which are based upon legendary matter, the very reverse is the case. Here some acquaintance with comparative mythology, which offers a most attractive and an almost unlimited field for study and literary research, is absolutely necessary for a due comprehension and appreciation of their poetical contents.

The "Fliegende Holländer" suggests to the student at least a perusal of Heine's version of the legend on which it is founded, if not also an examination of the story of the "Wandering Jew,"* and other myths of the past which treat of mortals who, having dared the power of God, were doomed to a deathless life, and to which it bears a strong analogy.

"Tannhäuser" takes us back to the middle ages, to the Wartburg, and the Court of the Landgrave Hermann. The poem, as designed by Wagner, is a happy combination of legendary and historical matter. The legend probably has its root in the classic story of Ulysses, held captive for eight years

* Interesting and detailed accounts of the legends of the "Wandering Jew," "Tannhäuser," and "Lohengrin" are to be found in "Curious Myths of the Middle Ages," by the Rev. S. Baring-Gould (Rivingtons).

by the nymph Calypso in the island of Ogygia. As it shaped itself in the middle ages, it reappears as a very ancient myth Christianised—a widespread tradition localised. Originally heathen, it has been transformed, and has acquired new beauty by the infusion of Christianity. Scattered over Europe, it exists in various forms, but in none so graceful as that attached to the Hörselberg; and, it may be added, by no one has it been so finely treated as by Wagner, who, combining it with the story of the Battle of the Bards at the Wartburg, has produced a dramatic poem as exquisitely beautiful as the life-giving music with which he has allied it.

"Lohengrin," "Tristan und Isolde," and "Parsifal" belong to a much earlier period, and bring us in contact with the romances of Arthur and the Holy Grail, as contained in the poems of Wolfram von Eschenbach.

Here too the thoroughly earnest student will not content himself with referring to Von Eschenbach, but, as Wagner has done, will go further afield, and examine other and older versions of the same material, so far as they are accessible, and as they appear in the works of Chretien de Troyes, Gottfried von Strasburg, Kiot, the Mabinogion of Wales (translated by Lady Guest), and in the "Morte d'Arthur" of our own Sir Thomas Malory.

"Der Ring des Nibelungen," the greatest of Wagner's works, at least in extent, takes us back to a still earlier age. Though Wagner had long been attracted by the story of Siegfried, it was not until he had succeeded in beholding it free from all subsequent dressing that he was completely entranced by it; the notion of making Siegfried the hero of a drama (he tells us in a pamphlet entitled "Eine Mittheilung an meine Freunde," and first published in 1851) would never have entered his head so long as he knew him only from the mediæval "Nibelungenlied." Thus is explained the fact of his going for his subject-matter to the more ancient sources supplied by the two Eddas.

A thorough investigation of these would necessitate a study of the ancient Icelandic and Runic mythology of the northern nations of Europe and Scandinavia, as it is exhibited in the Eddaic writings of the eleventh and two following centuries. The amount of labour which this would involve is self-apparent; to carry it out with any degree of completeness, except indirectly through the writings of German commentators, would probably be found impossible.

Though the task of examining "Die Meistersinger" is less beset with difficulties, it is by no means an easy one to dismiss in a few words. At the outset we are met with the difficulty that we can hardly speak of the mastersingers without also making mention of the minnesingers. To this we are driven by the fact that the amount of connection between the minne-

singers and the mastersingers of Germany was hotly debated during the first decade of the present century by Jacob Grimm and B. J. Docen.* Herr Grimm maintained that the minnesingers and mastersingers originally formed but one class of poets; Herr Docen was in favour of the opposite theory. A controversy between two such eminent men should not altogether be overlooked, when we consider how difficult it is to establish a boundary for the different periods of literary history. It is true that some of the minnesingers obtained the appellation of mastersingers, but this is not sufficient to establish the theory of their originally forming but one class of poets. As the result of subsequent researches, there is probably no one at the present day who would uphold the theory that the mastersingers were synonymous with the minnesingers, except so far as that mastersinging was the eventual outcome of minnesinging.

The minnesingers flourished in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. They were mostly of noble birth, and lived in kings' houses, or wandered about from court to court. Among the most famous were those whom at the beginning of the thirteenth century Hermann, Landgrave of Thuringia, invited to the Wartburg, viz., Wolfram von Eschenbach, Walther von der Vogelweide, Rheinhardt von Zweckhstein, Heinrich Schreiber, Johann Bitterolff, and Heinrich von Offterdingen.

The mastersingers, on the other hand, belonged to the burgher and artisan class, and to a later period. Nevertheless, they ascribed an extravagant antiquity to their institutions, although their statutes and regulations do not appear to have been completely established until the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. Heinrich von Meissen is generally looked upon as the founder of their schools and guilds. This writer, a doctor of theology, and Canon of the Cathedral of Mainz, obtained the surname of Frauenlob, or "Praise the ladies," on account of the tenour of his poems, which were chiefly of a contemplative character, warmed by mystical devotion for the blessed Virgin Mary, whom he regarded as the deified representative of the whole sex. He obtained such favour among the women of Mainz that on his death his corpse was carried by them to his grave, on the Eve of St. Andrew, 1318.

From the time of Frauenlob the cultivation of German poetry devolved almost exclusively upon the guilds of mastersingers in the great towns. Poetry (says a writer in vol. xxvi. of the "Edinburgh Review," to whom I am further indebted for much of the information respecting the mastersingers here advanced) certainly never had so singular a fortune in any other country.

* *Neuer literarischer Anzeiger*, 1807, Nos. 23, 24, 34, 43, &c., referred to in "Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg. Ein Versuch zur Einführung in die gleichnamige Dichtung Richard Wagner's," von Franz Müller. Munich: C. Kaiser.

It actually became one of the incorporated trades in all cities; and the burghers obtained the freedom of it, as of any other corporation. Of the majority of these humble bards little is known but their names. Still they obtained a monopoly of verse-craft, and extended their tuneful fraternities over the greater part of the German empire.

The poems of the mastersingers were always lyrical, and sung to music—generally to a given tune. The length of the verse, the number of the lines, and the order of the rhymes being variable, their poems were susceptible of a great variety of forms, which were called "weisen," or tunes. Each "weise," of which there were some hundreds, was named after its inventor. The entire poem was called a "bar," and was divided into three or more "gesätze," or "strophes." Each "gesätz" consisted generally of two "stollen" (literally "slices"), or shorter strophes in the same metre, and sung to the same tune. The first "gesätz" was followed by an "abgesang," or after-song, but differing in metre and in length from the preceding strophes. After the "abgesang" sometimes came another "gesätz," in the same metre and to the same tune as the first. The rules by which the construction of a "bar" was governed were to be found in the "Tabulatur," or code of laws drawn up by the societies. Their laws, which but too often savoured of pedantry, were certainly severe, but in some points might be advantageously imitated by poetasters of the present day; for, among other recommendations and prohibitions, they were actually forbidden to employ "sentences which nobody could understand," or "words in which no meaning could be discovered."

The candidate for admission into a guild was introduced to the assembly with great pomp and solemnity. Four "Merker" (markers), or examiners, sat behind a curtain to pass judgment on his qualifications. One of them had Martin Luther's translation of the Bible before him, it being considered as the standard of the language. The others attended to the rhyme and metre of the composition, and the melody to which it was sung. If they united in declaring that the candidate had complied with the statutes and regulations, he was decorated with a silver chain and badge—the latter representing King David playing upon the harp—and was honourably admitted into the guild. The members of a guild were thus classified: He who only partially knew the "Tabulatur" was called a "Schüler" (scholar); he who had completely familiarised himself with it was a "Schulfreund" (schoolman); he who could sing some five or six different tunes was a "Singer"; he who could make verses to a given tune was a "Poet"; and he who could invent a new tune was dubbed a "Master."

Nuremberg was the Athens of these incorporated poets. Hans Holtz, barber and mastersinger, who shaved there in

the middle of the fifteenth century, was one of the most active in advancing their art, as well as the newly discovered art of printing. But none of the mastersingers can vie with the industrious Hans Sachs, poet and shoemaker. Born at Nuremberg in 1494, his father, an honest tailor, placed him at an early age in the free school of the town, where, as he mentions in one of his poems, he was indifferently taught according to the bad method of those days. However, he managed to pick up a few scraps of Latin and Greek. In his fifteenth year he learnt shoemaking, and about the same time one Nunnenback, a weaver, instructed him in the rudiments of mastersinging. According to the old German custom, he travelled round the country before settling down to his trade. Hans confesses that his conduct during these rambles was not always exemplary, but he lost no opportunity of improving himself in the "praiseworthy art"; and in his twentieth year he composed his first "bar," a godly song, to the tune of "Long Marner," and was admitted to share the honours to which he had long aspired. He was partial to narrative poetry, but gained most renown by his plays and farces, some of which extend to seven acts. In the seventy-seventh year of his age he took an inventory of his stock-in-trade, and found that his works filled thirty folio volumes, all written with his own hand, and consisting of 4,200 mastership songs; 208 comedies, tragedies, and farces; 1,700 fables, tales, and miscellaneous poems; and 73 devotional, military, and love-songs—making a sum-total of 6,048 pieces, great and small. Out of these he culled as many as filled three massy folios, which were published in 1558-61; and, another edition being called for, he increased it from his manuscripts. During the whole of his life he continued nevertheless to work at his trade. He died in 1576, full of years and honour. He was a warm adherent of his great contemporary Luther, who has even deigned to acknowledge his services in the cause of the Reformation. Carlyle, in one of his essays, has thus pithily characterised him: "Hans," he says, "is not without genius and a shrewd irony; and, above all, the most gay, childlike, yet devout and solid character. A man neither to be despised nor patronised; but to be left standing on his own basis, as a singular product, and a still legible symbol and clear mirror of the time and country where he lived." It is precisely in this light that Wagner seems to have viewed him.

Of the circumstances which led to the choice of the mastersingers as the subject for an opera Wagner has himself told us.* It was in 1845, just after the completion of "Tannhäuser," that he was staying at a Bohemian watering-place. Freed for a time from the vitiating atmosphere of the "footlights," he

* "Eine Mittheilung an meine Freunde."

found himself in an unwonted merry mood. A short time previously he had already resolved that his next opera should be a comic one. This determination resulted principally from the advice of well-meaning friends that he should write an opera in a "lighter style," because this, they said, would procure him admission to the German theatres, and thus insure that success for the want of which his outward circumstances had been seriously threatened.

As among the Athenians of old a tragedy was followed by a merry satirical piece, there now suddenly appeared to him the picture of a comic play which might suitably be made to serve as a satirical supplement to his "Battle of the Bards at Wartburg."

The sketch which he at once drew up was not, however, destined to be carried out in the rapid manner in which it was conceived. First "Lohengrin" engrossed his attention; then the "Death of Siegfried," which eventually grew into the "Nibelung" tetralogy; and then "Tristan und Isolde." "Die Meistersinger," which must, therefore, have occupied his thoughts, more or less, for nearly a quarter of a century, was not completed till 1867. It was brought to a public hearing for the first time in the course of the following year, under the direction of Hans von Bülow, at Munich.

I wish I could now draw aside the curtain, and present you with a model performance of "Die Meistersinger." This being impossible, all I can further offer is a sketch of the action of the drama, with an occasional remark upon the bent and character of its musical construction.

The scene of the entire drama is laid at Nuremberg, about the middle of the sixteenth century. The principal personages represented are twelve mastersingers, with Hans Sachs at their head, the next two in importance being Veit Pogner, a rich goldsmith, and Sixtus Beckmesser, town-clerk; Eva, Pogner's daughter; Magdalena, her old nurse and companion; Walther von Stolzing, a young knight from Franconia; and David, Hans Sachs's apprentice both in the art of shoemaking and mastersinging.

The overture, a masterpiece of sonorous instrumentation and contrapuntal complicacy, presents us with a thoroughly realistic picture of mediæval German life. Its leading themes severally illustrate the pompousness of the mastersingers, the pertness of their apprentices, and Walther's passionate love for Eva. Without coming to a full close it leads directly to the first scene. This represents the interior of the church of St. Catharine, in which afternoon service is being held on the eve of St. John's Day. The last verse of a chorale in praise of St. John the Baptist is being sung. Among the occupants of the last row of seats are Eva and Magdalena; not far from them, and leaning against a pillar, is the young knight, Walther von

Stolzing. During the singing of the chorale he casts anxious glances toward Eva, which, from the frequency with which she returns them, appear by no means unwelcome to her. What is passing in *his* mind the orchestra tells us by introducing, as interludes between the lines of the chorale, fragments of the motives indicating his passionate wooing with which we have been made familiar in the overture. As the congregation disperses Walther approaches the two women. His looks become words; he begs a word of Eva—only a single word. Nothing loth, Eva suddenly discovers that she has left her necktie behind in her seat, and sends off Magdalena to fetch it; she returns all too soon. Then it is her brooch that is missing; that too Magdalena must fetch for the "careless child." On returning a second time Magdalena finds that she has herself forgotten her hymn-book, and must needs go and look for that. Thus time is afforded to Walther for far more than a single word. As a matter of life or death, it behoves him to learn whether Eva is already affianced to another. This is the question he at last boldly puts to her. For a reply Eva refers him to Magdalena. She, after trying to put him off to another time and place, admits that in point of fact Eva *is* already affianced. "But without a bridegroom," quickly retorts the maiden. But how can that be? Magdalena explains that no one can say who the bridegroom will be till the morrow, when the mastersingers will award him the prize. Eva quickly rejoins, "And the bride herself hands him the wreath." A riddle all this to the young knight—but the women quickly solve it for him. On the morrow a contest of song is to be held, and he wins the prize to whom the masters adjudge it, subject to the assent of the affianced maiden. "She then chooses?" asks Walther. "You, or none!" exclaims Eva, forgetting herself; and, turning to Magdalena, adds, "Help me to win the knight!" for though, as she says, she has only seen him in the flesh for the first time on the previous day, she had already seen him in a picture, looking like David—not like King David, with the harp and long beard, upon the mastersingers' banner, but like David the youth, as he appears in Master Dürer's picture, when with his sling he slew the giant Goliath.

The humorous side of this scene turns on the fact that, at Eva's first mention of David, Magdalena supposes she is alluding to David, Hans Sachs's apprentice, for whom she has a warm corner in her heart, as indeed David also has in his for her, she having on various occasions supplied him with good things from her master's kitchen.

David, who is characterised by self-assurance, a large amount of animal spirits, and a loving regard for his master, now enters, it being his duty to arrange the church for a sitting of the mastersingers. This he proceeds to do by

drawing a curtain which shuts off the choir from the nave, in which the sitting is to be held. Before starting homewards with Eva, Magdalene confides Walther to David's care, to be "coached up" by him in the mastersingers' art, with a view to his admission into the guild. Passionately taking leave of Eva for awhile, Walther remains behind in the church. Other apprentices now enter, bringing with them benches, and set about erecting the "gemerk"—the inclosure in which the "marker" is to sit. David, who refuses to help them on the ground that he has other work in hand, is mercilessly "chaffed" by his brother apprentices in consequence. As laughingly they proceed with their work, he turns to Walther. Regarding him in a patronising manner, and assuming the character of marker, he calls out roughly, "'Now begin!'—thus shouts the marker. Don't you know, now you are to sing?" "What's the 'marker'?" asks Walther. Replying by another question, David asks, "Don't you know that? were you never at a singing-trial?" "Never, where handicraftsmen were the judges," he replies. "Are you then a 'poet,' a 'singer,' a 'schoolman,' or a 'scholar'?" asks David. Of such terms of expression Walther confesses he has never heard. "And yet you will straightway become a 'master'?" That being his desire, David proceeds to instruct him, though he curses Magdalena in his heart for the task she has imposed upon him. First, running through a long list of technicalities, David recounts what he has himself learnt in the course of a year's study, and asks, "How far do you think that has brought me?" "Perhaps to the making of a pair of right good shoes," Walther sarcastically replies. But, as it is not shoemaking, but singing, that Walther wishes to learn, David continues, enumerating a long list of things which he must not only learn by heart, but also learn to sing, and in a proper manner, according to the masters' rules. Confessing his own want of success, he advises Walther to give up all idea of striving for a "mastership." Nothing daunted, Walther asks for an explanation of some of the terms David has made use of, and in the end he learns that before he can become a "master," the lower grades of "singer" and "poet" must be obtained. David now turns to the apprentices, who, without him to direct them, have bungled in their work. The singer's chair, the masters' and apprentices' seats, and the marker's box having been duly arranged, Pogner and Beckmesser enter from the sacristy in close converse. Other masters enter by degrees. When all have arrived, Pogner announces that he has a weighty proposition to make. This is none other than that he will give his daughter Eva and all his possessions to the winner in the singing contest of the morrow, but with the proviso that the maiden gives her assent. A mastersinger she must wed, or not at all. The mastersingers at first loudly

applaud; but on further consideration show their aversion to the idea of a woman being allowed to participate with them as a judge on such an occasion. To Beckmesser, the "butt" of the piece, such an arrangment appears particularly distasteful; for, vain and conceited as he is of his mastership, he knows full well that in the event of his musical and poetical powers being put to the proof in a contest of song he would come badly off. Sachs, who in the drama may be regarded as typifying good sense and good nature, goes a step farther than Pogner, and suggests that the people generally should have a vote in the matter. "The people! that would be an end to art and art-rules," say the masters. "Nay," replies Sachs, "it would be a good thing if now and then our rules were tried by the people, for whom we cater, lest, having grown rusty and fettered by custom, they lose their force and die"—a sentiment which much pleases the apprentices, who jump up and rub their hands with delight. Pogner's offer having been accepted, he forthwith introduces Walther von Stolzing to the assembly, as being desirous to enter their guild, and as willing to pass the ordeal of singing before them. On being questioned as to his antecedents, Walther replies, in a song which is as remarkable for its continuity as for its melodic beauty, that at home in winter time he has studied a book compiled by one of his ancestors, and that Walther von der Vogelweide has therefore been his master. "A goodly master," remarks Hans Sachs. "But long since dead," sarcastically adds Beckmesser. Nature and the wood-birds, poets and their stories of adventure have been his teachers. A master-song, if haply such it may prove, he is willing to sing. Beckmesser, who recognises in Walther a dangerous rival for Eva's hand, after one or two spiteful remarks, enters the marker's box; and Kothner, one of the masters, reads aloud from the "Leges Tabulaturæ."

Seven faults are permitted the singer, but no more. Walther mounts the "singing-stool," and at the marker's command, "Now begin," commences a tender song of spring and love. The marker within is heard busy at work, and at the end of the first verse holds out the slate completely covered with chalk marks. Walther, aghast at the interruption, appeals to the masters to be allowed to continue his song. Pogner and Sachs alone stand up for him against Beckmesser, who protests that, among other faults, there was not a single full close, no grace notes, and not a trace of melody or *coloratur*. Pogner accuses the marker of having allowed his feelings to get the better of his temper. Sachs maintains that he has found the young knight's song altogether new, and not at all confused. "Though his ways are not our ways, he seems to have a way of his own. Such a song should not be criticised by *our* rules, but we should seek for rules to fit it. The knight should be heard to the end. By our laws too, it

is written, the marker must from prejudice be free. If he turns to wooing, how can he help doing wrong to his rival there?" Beckmesser retaliates by remarking that since Sachs has taken so warmly to the muse, it has fared ill with his boots and shoes. Pointing to the slits in those he has on, he declares that if Sachs would only finish the new pair of shoes he has in hand for him, he would willingly declare all his verse and rhyme sublime. Sachs confesses that he has the best of him there, but still urges that the knight should be allowed to complete his song. Amid the general confusion which ensues, and while Beckmesser hands round the slate and points in detail to the faults thereon recorded, Walther remounts the singing-stool. Defiantly, as if inspired by desperation, he sings of screech-owls and ravens, with which he contrasts a beautiful bird that leads him to its forest home, where, when raven-masters have done their croaking, he will sing his lady's praise. Disdainfully he descends from the singing-stool, and, turning his back upon the masters, is about to depart. Sachs, who throughout has observed him with growing attention and admiration, pronounces his song a flow of genius, and him a true-born poet-knight. The apprentices join hands, and dance and sing around the marker's box, whilst the masters declare that Walther has irretrievably failed in his singing. As a piece of polyphonic writing for men's voices, the finale of this first act is probably without a parallel in the history of opera. Walther and each of the twelve masters has an independent part in 2-2 time, against which the apprentices (altos and tenors) simultaneously sing a four-part chorus in 6-4 time.

The action of the second act takes place in a street of Nuremberg, on the evening and night of the same day. On one side Pogner's stately mansion is seen; on the other Sachs's humble abode, with his workshop in front. David and his brother apprentices are engaged in putting up the shutters of their masters' shops, singing a lively chorus the while. Magdalena, approaching David, anxiously asks, "How fared it with the knight? You tutored him well? He won the wreath?" With the doleful news of his failure she hastens back to Pogner's house. The other apprentices, who have witnessed their brief interview, surround David, and, mimicking Magdalena's voice, mockingly congratulate him on his choice of a lady-love. On the appearance of Sachs they hastily disperse. David is severely reproved, and, instead of his usual evening's singing-lesson, is set to work on a pair of shoes. As Sachs and David enter their workshop, Eva and her father, coming along the street, seat themselves under a lime-tree in front of Pogner's house, and converse on the possible events of the morrow. On going in to supper Eva learns from Magdalena of Walther's failure, and determines at once to betake herself to Sachs for further particulars and

advice. David has been sent off to bed, Sachs has given over work, and is sitting in front of his shop musing on the events of the day, particularly on Walther's song. He can neither quite recall or forget it. It sounded so old, and yet so new; like song of birds in sweetest May. Though against all rules, not a fault could be found. Though it angered the masters, it pleased Hans Sachs. In this musing mood Eva finds him. Disturbed in his meditations, he takes for granted that she has come to complain of her new shoes. No; they are so richly embroidered that she has not even tried them on. "But tomorrow you will wear them as a bride," Sachs reminds her. Perhaps so; but she would like to know who the bridegroom is to be. It is this that troubles her. Could not Sachs help her—Sachs, who has been her friend ever since she was born? Could he not perhaps (she naïvely hints) himself enter the lists and outsing Beckmesser, and thus rid her of an unwelcome suitor? A happy thought of hers; that would be delightful, he says; for then Sachs, a childless widower, who once had a wife and children enough, would thus have a wife and child in one. That he is joking with her is plain enough; still she hesitates to question him on the subject nearest her heart, until he leads up to it by telling her how he has been troubled by the knight's failure in the singing trial. "Sang he so badly," she asks, "that nothing can help him?" "My child," he replies, "for him all is lost; he ne'er can be a master in any country; for he who is a master born, among masters has the worst chance of all." One other question she puts, "Among the masters did he win not a single friend?" Hans answers evasively, and to the effect that *here* they will not be overridden, but that he must seek his happiness elsewhere. Eva, misunderstanding him, thinks him cold, and, disappointed and out of humour, goes off with Magdalena, who has repeatedly called to her to come home. As Eva turns her back on Sachs, he nods significantly to her, adding to himself, "Now let me see how I can best help them." On reaching home Eva learns from Magdalene that Beckmesser is coming to serenade her. Alas! if it were but the other! She must keep her appointment with *him*, and, disguised in Magdalena's clothes, goes out into the street to meet Walther, Magdalena having consented to personate *her* at her chamber window on Beckmesser's arrival. She soon meets with Walther, who is in despair at the result of his morning's singing, and roundly abuses the masters. Their only hope seems to be in flight, and he urges her to elope with him. To this she consents, and he feels now that he has won the prize-maiden, the masters notwithstanding. First they are hindered from escaping by the approach of a watchman, and then by Sachs, who has overheard their talk, and, opening his shop, has cast a bright light across the street upon them, where they are hiding

under a tree. Beckmesser soon approaches, lute in hand, and takes up his position in front of Pogner's house. With difficulty Eva restrains Walther from attacking him. On his beginning to tune his instrument, Sachs, who is seated at his bench in front of his shop, hammers loudly upon his last, and at the same time, at the top of his voice, sings a ludicrously comic song about Adam and Eve in Paradise and the invention of boots and shoes. To Beckmesser's remonstrances at the noise he is making, Sachs replies that the shoes are for *him;* to get them ready by the morrow he must work late at night; this he can only do in the open air; and must sing at the same time to keep himself awake. "To the devil with the shoes!" cries Beckmesser—quiet is all he wants to continue his serenade. Sachs goes on to the second verse of his song, which merges into a quartet, in which each gives vent to his feelings. Walther is in doubt as to whether it is directed against him and Eva; Eva feels that it bodes them no good. Beckmesser fears that Eva will mistake Sachs's boisterous song for *his* loving serenade; and at last, trying what flattery will do, tells Sachs that, much as he values him as a shoemaker, he values him more as an art-friend, and begs him to listen to the song, with which he hopes on the morrow to win the maiden, and to give him his candid opinion of it. After casting back in his teeth some of his rude remarks of the morning, Sachs at last complies on the condition that he is allowed to mark each fault in his song with a blow of his hammer upon the shoe on his last; for, as he naïvely remarks, though the song may be of importance to Beckmesser, the finishing of the shoes is equally important to *him*. Accordingly Beckmesser begins a prelude on his lute, but finding that he has tuned the D string a tone too high, proceeds to let it down; the process of tuning being represented in the orchestra by the first violins shaking on E and E flat, and passing *glissando* to D. Beckmesser sings some ridiculous words to an equally ridiculous and ludicrously florid tune, which does not at all fit them. Each false accent that he makes, and they are many, Sachs marks with a blow of his hammer, stopping from time to time to criticise and correct them. In this way the shoes are finished quicker than the song, and on their completion Sachs holds them up, and triumphantly points to them as a pair of genuine "marker's" shoes. The noise which the two have made has awakened the neighbours, who at first look out of their windows, and then come out into the street to see what is the matter. David recognises Magdalena at Eva's window, with Beckmesser below, as he thinks, serenading *her*. His jealousy aroused, he rushes forth, falls upon Beckmesser, and smashes his lute with a cudgel. By degrees the crowd increases; no one knows what it is all about; one thing is certain, there is a row; and

in this the apprentices are the most eager to join. The last to swell it are the women, who have come out to look for their husbands and brothers. When the tumult is at its height, and just as Walther and Eva are thinking that now is their time to escape, Sachs, who has been watching them, sallies forth, and seizes Walther by the arm. Having seen Eva safe into her father's house, he drags Walther into his, and shuts to the door. At the sound of the watchman's horn and the possible approach of the police the crowd quickly disperses, and quiet once more reigns over the moonlit gabled street, which the watchman has now all to himself. Thus ends the second act with a quadruple chorus, which furnishes a splendid example of Wagner's skill in polyphony, and of his powers in building up all the elements of a crowd.

The third act opens on a bright summer's Sunday morning—St. John's Day—the quiet and meditative stillness of which is vividly portrayed in the orchestral introduction. Sachs is seen sitting in an armchair in his workshop, and reading a huge folio upon his knees, while the morning sun streams in upon him through the window. So absorbed is he that he does not at first perceive David, who, after taking home Beckmesser's new shoes, enters from the street with a basket on his arm, which he proceeds to unpack. It contains flowers and ribbons, and at the bottom a cake and sausage—the gifts of Magdalena. From Sachs's silence he fears that he is angry with him on account of the part he has taken in the previous evening's disturbance; he begs pardon, and further excuses himself that he is not all that an apprentice should be. Sachs receives him kindly, and, on his noticing the flowers and ribbons, David reminds him that it is his name-day, and that they are for him. On being asked if he is ready with a speech, David sings a humorous folk-song about St. John the Baptist, the comicality of which is increased by his inadvertently beginning to sing it to the ridiculous tune of Beckmesser's serenade, which has stuck in his head. Sachs applauds him, and promises him that he shall attend him as his herald at the singing-contest in the afternoon, and sends him off to make himself smart. Left alone, Sachs turns again to his big book and his meditations, till he is aroused by the entry of Walther from an inner room, where, as his guest, he has spent the night. In reply to his morning greeting, Walther tells him that he has not slept long, but soundly, and that he has just awoke from a wonderfully beautiful dream. Sachs asks him to detail it to him, but he doubts whether he can recall it. It is evidently in reference to Schopenhauer's dream-theory—of which Wagner is an upholder—that dreaming, especially at early dawn, is akin to inspiration, and that poets' work consists in embodying this in form, that Sachs now urges him to make the attempt, encouraging him by saying that it may turn out that he has been inspired with

a master-song which may gain him the prize he so covets. Hope gives him courage, and Sachs promises to help him out by reference to the rules—rules which, he says, have helped many a one to find that which was lost, and with which dreaming and poetising go hand in hand. With the song that Walther now rehearses before Sachs Wagner must have taken infinite pains, for the version which is printed with the music is quite a different one to that which originally appeared when only the poem was published. That it is as much a master-song for Wagner as for Walther will not be gainsaid. As Walther sings, Sachs writes down the words and after each stanza comments upon the music. He has little fault to find, but points out one or two things not quite in accordance with the rules of the "Tabulatur," as, for instance, when Walther ends the second stanza in a different key to the first. With the melody of the "abgesang," or "after-song," he remarks that he is a little free, and that, he adds, though *he* does not regard it as a fault, is sure to offend his elders on account of its being difficult to catch up. In the end he loudly praises his song, but advises him on singing it before a larger audience to keep his morning dream well in view. During the absence of the two, who have retired to array themselves for the afternoon's festival, Beckmesser enters, in a high state of excitement. Finding himself alone, he looks stealthily around, and descrying Walther's song lying upon the table, inquisitively takes it up. "A poem by Sachs!" he exclaims, and on perusing it at once jumps to the conclusion that Sachs is intriguing against him, and himself means to sing as his rival. Hearing footsteps, he pockets the poem, and on Sachs entering, accuses him of his intentions, and abuses him as the meanest of rascals. "May be," coolly retorts Sachs, "yet I have never pocketed what I have found on another's table; and, that you may not incur the reputation of being a thief, I make you a present of the song." On further hearing that he may do what he likes with it, and on Sachs promising that he will never claim it as his own, Beckmesser accepts it eagerly, for, as he says, his song of the night before only frightened Pogner's daughter, and he has no time to compose a new one. Sachs advises him to be careful as to the tune to which he sings it, for it is not easy; and he goes off home to commit it to memory. Scarcely has Sachs got rid of Beckmesser when Eva enters, dressed in her best. Replying to Sachs's friendly greeting, she sighs that, though the milliner may have succeeded, the shoes still pinch. Too broad to suit her vanity, the new shoes are still too tight. Though, as Sachs perceives, it is the allegorical shoe which pinches, he tenderly takes off her real shoes, and sets to work to stretch them. As she is standing with one foot upon a stool, Walther comes in and stands spellbound before her, while Sachs at work sings of the miseries of a cobbler. In this position, as if

inspired, Walther, at Sachs's request, adds a third verse to his song. At its close Sachs remarks to Eva, "That is a genuine master-song that you have just heard," and fitting on her shoes, asks, "Do they still pinch *now?*" Eva bursts into tears, and throws herself on his breast. Sobbing, she thanks him for all he has done for her, and asks how she can requite his kindness, adding that if she had had to choose, Sachs would have been her husband, but now she is no longer a free agent, and there is no choice left her. "My child," Sachs replies, "I know a sorrowful story of Tristan and Isolde, but Hans Sachs was too wise to follow King Marke's example." On David and Magdalena now entering, Sachs exclaims, "Here are sponsors, now to the baptism!" All look surprised; and singing to the tune of the chorale with which the first act opens, "A son has here been born, and after the mastersingers' custom must receive a name," he explains that the son is Walther's master-song, and names it the "happily interpreted morning-dream" tune. Between jest and earnest he makes David kneel down, and administers to him a severe box on the ear, that he may not forget the occasion. After expressing their several feelings in a quintet, they go off to take part in the afternoon's festival.

The scene now changes to a meadow on the banks of a river outside the city walls. Men, women and children of all grades, dressed in their best, line the banks of the river. To while away the time, while waiting for the masters, the apprentices organise a dance, stepping it to a lively waltz-measure, which is as quaint and effective on the stage as it is out of place in the concert-room, especially when, as has sometimes happened, it is announced as a "Waltz by Wagner." Boats gaily decked with flags arrive one after another, and as the various tradesmen's guilds step out of them they are received by the apprentices, who do duty as marshals and heralds, and escort them up to a stage which has been erected for the accommodation of the mastersingers and other grandees of the occasion. Each guild on arriving sings its own particular song in chorus, and erects its banner near the stage. Of the mastersingers, who bring up the rear of the procession, Hans Sachs is the last to appear. As the favourite of the people, he is greeted with one of his own songs sung in chorus by the whole assembly. This is a well-known song—"Die Wittembergisch Nachtigall, die man jetzt höret überal"—composed by the real Hans Sachs in honour of Luther. Having taken his place upon the daïs, as master of the ceremonies, he addresses the multitude, telling them of Master Pogner's determination to bestow his daughter's hand in marriage upon the victor in the coming contest of song. Silence having been proclaimed, Beckmesser is first called upon for his song. Though, like a schoolboy, he has plodded at his task till the last moment, he has failed to get it by heart,

and on mounting the singing-stool and making the attempt, turns the words of Walther's song into the most egregious nonsense, and sings them to a tune which is very much akin to his ridiculous serenade of the previous evening. The bystanders give free vent to their criticism; and, on their bursting out into a loud laugh, Beckmesser hastily descends from the singing-stool, makes a rush at Sachs, and denounces him as the author of the wretched song he has been trying to sing. Sachs calmly replies that so beautiful a poem is none of his, and Herr Beckmesser best knows how he came by it. Beautiful? the masters ask; and the people think Sachs is joking. Yes! beautiful it is, he declares, and only requires to be sung with proper emphasis and to its proper tune to be duly appreciated. If there is any one here present who can do this, let him step forward: he will at once prove himself the author of the poem and worthy to be called a master. Amid general excitement Walther comes forward, and sings his own song to his own tune. It gains the approval of all, and the mastersingers declare him victor. Content with having won Eva's hand, he scornfully declines the proffered honour of a mastership. Sachs reproves him for this in a speech, bidding him honour German masters, and ending up with the rhyme (as rendered into English by Frederick Corder)—

> Though holy Rome herself should pass away,
> Our glorious German art will ne'er decay.

Thus, with the bethrothal of Eva and Walther and of Magdalena and David, all ends well for all except Beckmesser, who slinks off to hide his diminished head.

As a comical pendant to "Tannhäuser," though not so satirical a one of the mastersingers as Wagner originally intended it to be, "Die Meistersinger" is not without its analogy to this. In "Tannhäuser" it is the victory of virtue over vice that is typified; "Die Meistersinger" represents the victory of genius, aided by good sense, over pedantry and conventionalism. The moral sought to be conveyed is this: that art is progressive, and that rules are useful, and are only to be broken by those who have learned to observe them.

Of Wagner's later works "Die Meistersinger" is by far the most vocal—by which I mean to say that singing, from the singer's or singing-master's point of view, greatly preponderates over the declamatory style which so largely abounds in "Tristan" and in the "Nibelungen." There is singing everywhere: in the church, in the street, and in the meadows. Each of the principal personages has his song or songs, which, with little more than the addition of a full close, may be eliminated and sung apart from the opera, in which, that there may be no break in the continuity of the dramatic action, each scene merges almost imperceptibly into another. Indeed,

upwards of a dozen of the favourite pieces have actually been published in this way. That the chorus, which was almost banished from "Tristan" and the "Nibelungen," forms an important factor none will regret. For these reasons, but more especially because Walther gains his victory by means of a song in regular form, and not by declamatory singing, certain of Wagner's critics have looked upon "Die Meistersinger" as tantamount to a recantation of views previously expressed by him. Nothing could be more opposed to fact. That he does not object on principle to a song or a concerted piece, when either can be introduced appropriately and without disturbing the dramatic action, Wagner has fully proved in his latest work, "Der Ring des Nibelungen," as well as here.

In the absence of both oral and ocular demonstration it is manifestly impossible to say much which would be of practical utility about the musical construction of "Die Meistersinger." To attempt this would be like offering you an analytical programme without a performance, or even a score to refer to. A word or two, however, as to Wagner's plan of working and his instrumentation may not be amiss. Here, as elsewhere, but with more persistency than in any of his previous works, "Tristan" excepted, the so-called *leitmotiv* principle is carried out to its furthest extent; that is to say, by means of set melodic phrases the characters of the different personages and their prevailing passions are vividly portrayed, these melodic phrases being found in the voice-part or in the accompaniment each time that the passions and the sentiments which they express are brought into play. It is, however, in the accompaniment, rather than in the voice-parts, that they mostly abound. For, as Liszt has aptly remarked, "Wagner makes the orchestra reflect; in his hands it reveals to us the soul, the passions, the sentiments, the slightest emotions of his personages. With him the orchestra becomes the echo, the fine veil through which he lets us perceive all the vibrations of their hearts; one might say that they palpitate in this medium, and across its sonorous and diaphanous walls we are alive to the most impetuous as well as the slightest emotions."

The constitution of the orchestra which Wagner employs in "Die Meistersinger" is in the main identical with that to which Beethoven has accustomed us in the last movements of his Fifth and Ninth Symphonies, except that he uses three trumpets instead of two, and, instead of employing a contrafagotto, supplements the trombones with a bass tuba. The wood-wind instruments he has been content to use in pairs, instead of in threes, as he has done in "Tristan" and the "Nibelungen," not for the sake of additional power, but in order to obtain complete chords of the same shade and colour.

The trumpets and horns are occasionally used in a peculiar manner for the sake of a special effect. They are muted, and at the same time blown hard. Used in this way, they have the effect of huge toy instruments, and add greatly to the realistic character of the street-row scene, and the arrival of a guild of toy-instrument makers on the scene of action in the last act. The only additional instruments employed are a harp, a lute, and—on the stage—a watchman's horn, trumpets, and drums.

Wagner has frequently been spoken of as a noisy composer; but surely only by those who have been unwilling or unable to distinguish between noise and sonority. In "Die Meistersinger" he can only be reproached with being noisy in the street row, necessarily a realistic scene; and even here he never exceeds the bounds of musical propriety. Throughout the opera it is only on the rarest occasions that the full orchestra is heard, but nevertheless the almost unprecedented sonority attained is always present; and this is the result, not of the doubling of parts, but of widespread harmony and polyphony. The variety of tone-colouring and novel combinations and devices employed are no less remarkable.

Time and space fail me to go further into the matter. In conclusion, therefore, I can only say to those who have not yet witnessed a performance of "Die Meistersinger": Seize the first opportunity of so doing; a rare treat is in store for you; but study the text, and, if possible, also the score, beforehand; and, as Wagner recommended to hearers of his "Nibelungen," listen to it, not with your critical intelligence, but with your real intelligence.

DISCUSSION.

The Chairman.—I am sure we have all been extremely interested by the very able analysis which our friend Mr. Barry has given us of Wagner's "Meistersinger." I can testify, from a fair knowledge of the work, that it is not by any means easy to convey a definite idea of it without the aid of musical illustration, simply by description; and I must confess to a certain feeling of surprise, although I knew something of my friend Mr. Barry's capabilities before, at his having given us such a good notion as he has done of the general construction and outline of the work. I shall have a very few words to say myself, because I did not come here with the slightest expectation or intention of making a speech; and I have been so busy lately that, although I thought I should like to look into this question of the "Meistersinger" before coming to the meeting of the Musical Association, I really

have been so busy I have not had time to open the score. I would simply make one remark, which has suggested itself to me while the paper was being read. It will probably have surprised those of you who are not acquainted with the music to find how little comparatively Mr. Barry has said about the music itself, and how very much he has said about the libretto. But I think that is a necessary consequence of the system on which Wagner writes. With most other operas, taking those of Mozart and Beethoven, and the other predecessors of Wagner, the music is the principal thing, and the libretto is a secondary consideration altogether. In fact, in many operas the libretto is a positive nuisance, and an injury to the effect of the whole—as, for instance, Weber's "Euryanthe." It has a most absurd libretto, which has ruined the effect of the work, and prevented its popularity; but with Wagner, I will not say the proceeding is exactly the reverse, for that is not the case, but the music and the drama are of equal importance, and the music depends so completely on the form of the drama that in directing your principal attention to the drama itself, Mr. Barry has only followed out Wagner's own system of procedure to its logical issue. I thought it might be as well to say a few words on that subject for the sake of those who are not acquainted with the work itself. Those who do know "Die Meistersinger" will understand that there was hardly any other possible course. But even if Mr. Barry had been able with the aid of a piano to give us those *leitmotivs* or representative themes which he referred to, after all we should get no more idea of the work as a whole than of the construction of a house from a man taking two or three bricks round in his pocket as a sample. Therefore I think that will be quite a sufficient explanation or justification, if any were needed, which I do not think it is, for the course which Mr. Barry has taken in his paper. He was speaking about the instrumentation. I have not had the opportunity, unfortunately, of hearing the music on the stage. That is a pleasure I hope we shall have before very long, if current rumours are to be relied on; but my impression certainly is, from a study of the score, that the "Meistersinger" on the whole may be called the least noisy of Wagner's operas; that there is a smaller proportion of music written for the full orchestra than in most of his operas. It is certainly written for a smaller orchestra than any work since "Tannhäuser," and a small proportion of the work is for full orchestra; there is a large part of it in which effects are obtained by just a few notes judiciously placed.

Mr. Barry.—In the whole of the overture there are only eight bars in which the full orchestra comes in.

The Chairman.—I know there is a very small proportion indeed, for I have seen a part of the first act where there are

fifty-two pages in which the full orchestra is never used at all.

Mr. Barry.—That is certainly so.

The Chairman.—I think, therefore, everybody who will study this score, or almost any of Wagner's scores, will understand what absurd nonsense it is for people to talk, as ignorant people frequently do, about Wagner being noisy. He is about the least noisy of any modern composer. He is one of the richest, and one of the most sonorous, but there is certainly no one who makes less noise as distinguished from legitimate tone. I am sure there are some other gentlemen present who will be able to make further remarks on this subject.

Mr. G. A. Osborne.—As this opera seems to have more melody really in it than many of the operas of Wagner, it does seem strange that it has not had the success that you would have imagined it ought to have had in Germany; because if you take out from that opera the melodies that can be retained easily, we find that there are numbers of them; but how is it that it does not appeal to the general public and secure the success that those melodies warrant? It does seem strange to me how critics have written about this opera; they seem to take much the same view as some of the critics of Berlioz have done with regard to his "L'Enfance du Christ," saying that he was really so displeased with what he had done before, that he was determined to compose in a more simple manner for the future. Certainly that idea never entered Berlioz' head. I should like to know from Mr. Barry why "Die Meistersinger" has not succeeded more in Germany.

Mr. Barry.—Where it has been played it has been as successful as any other of Wagner's operas; but certainly with opera directors it has this against it: it is so difficult and expensive to put on the stage; it requires an immense number of performers—twelve mastersingers, besides principals—and one knows that opera directors are apt to study economy. If they can draw houses with "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin," naturally they would not give the "Meistersinger."

The Chairman.—There is one word to be said as to the reason of its not very frequent production, and that is that it is very difficult music indeed, not as regards the large number of performers, but as regards the number of rehearsals it would entail. A large number of rehearsals means an increased expense to the manager of the theatre, and therefore, for more reasons than one, it is a very expensive work to bring out.

Mr. Barry.—That is very true.

The Chairman.—Any one who attempted to play the "Meistersinger" with less than twelve or fifteen rehearsals would simply show he was an idiot.

Mr. G. A. Osborne.—Considering he has not used the

orchestra so powerfully in this, do you think the number of rehearsals would require to be so numerous?

Mr. BARRY.—It is written in a very complicated way. It is not mere doubling of parts.

The CHAIRMAN.—The score is just as complex as Bach's Mass in B minor as regards the polyphony and independence of the parts.

Mr. BARRY.—I was present at a rehearsal of it once at Weimar, and the director there made a great to-do over it; he had his desk put into a different place in the orchestra in order to conduct it more efficiently.

Major McCREAGH.—What year was it produced in first?

Mr. BARRY.—In 1868.

Mr. OSBORNE.—Is it produced in English yet?

Mr. BARRY.—It is not published. I believe that Carl Rosa contemplates bringing it out with a translation by Mr. Jackson, an American.

The CHAIRMAN.—Mr. Jackson has made one, certainly.

Mr. BARRY.—That will probably be the one which Messrs. Schott* will publish. It has also been translated by Mr. Corder. I have seen the first act in manuscript. The rest he had no second copy of, and I did not like to allow his only copy to go through the post, nor did he, so that I have not seen that.

Mr. FROST.—As a matter of personal experience, I was in Dresden about twelve years ago, about twelve months after it was produced. At that time there was only a temporary opera-house in Dresden, the old one having been burnt down. They were then playing three of Wagner's operas, "Tannhäuser," "Lohengrin" and "Die Meistersinger." At that time "Die Meistersinger" was by far the most popular of the three, and the tunes it contains were really whistled about the streets of Dresden when I was there. I should think within six weeks it was played about a dozen times, "Lohengrin" five or six, and "Tannhäuser" two or three. Whether that popularity has since decreased in Dresden of course it is impossible for me to say.

Major McCREAGH.—A short time before that I was in Dresden, when there were four of Wagner's operas, but the "Meistersinger" was not one of them. They had the "Fliegende Holländer," "Rienzi," "Tannhäuser," "Lohengrin," and they were played repeatedly. On the subject of sonority I may say there was only one of them which struck me as perhaps a little noisy, and that was "Rienzi," which was his earlier work.

* Since the above discussion took place, Messrs. Schott have accepted Mr. Corder's English version of "Die Meistersinger" for publication, with a view to its being used in connection with the German performances announced to take place next year at Drury Lane Theatre, under the direction of Herr Hans Richter.

Mr. STEPHENS.—In "Rienzi" Wagner imitated the Italian school.

Major McCREAGH.—It struck me it was rather a pale imitation of Meyerbeer.

Mr. BARRY.—Spontini was rather his model, was he not?

The CHAIRMAN.—I should like to say one single word with regard to the point my friend Mr. Osborne mentioned, as to the comparison of Berlioz—talking of the "Meistersinger" occupying a somewhat analagous position to that of "L'Enfance du Christ" of Berlioz; I do not think there is very much parallel between them.

Mr. OSBORNE.—I did not say there was a parallel, but with regard to the observations of different critics. Some of the critics have made the same observations in regard to the "Meistersinger" as the critics of the present moment have done in regard to "L'Enfance du Christ." I have read several articles in which they refer to what was really the fact in Paris, for I was there at the time it was brought out; they used to say then, "See, Berlioz condemns his own system entirely by bringing that out." I was not expressing a personal opinion.

The CHAIRMAN.—I beg your pardon, I did not quite understand that. It is quite true that "L'Enfance du Christ" is much simpler than the "Damnation de Faust," but I do not think it is any retrogression, nor that it is generally supposed to be retrogression on the part of Berlioz, but because it deals with so much simpler a subject.

Mr. BARRY.—I think that is the answer that Berlioz has given himself.

The CHAIRMAN.—Just so. I heard "L'Enfance du Christ" at St. James's Hall the other day, and I also heard it at Manchester, where I went down on purpose. I do not think it will ever equal "Faust" in general popularity; but I think musicians will esteem it very highly, if not quite as much. I do myself.

Mr. OSBORNE.—I shall be glad to hear it as often as it is given.

The CHAIRMAN.—I do not think it will ever be so popular. It has not so much of general attractiveness and go; it is too quiet—it is more for the musician than for the general public. If no other member has anything to say I am sure I shall be only conveying the feelings of this meeting in moving that we give our warmest thanks to Mr. Barry for his interesting paper.

The motion having been carried unanimously—

Mr. BARRY.—I thank you very much. I think there is nothing that has been stated that I need reply to; I have only to thank you for listening to me so patiently, and especially you, Mr. Prout, for the kind excuses which you have made for me,

in regard to my having laid so much greater stress upon the libretto than upon the music, which I should have tried to make for myself if you had not so kindly done it for me.

Mr. Osborne then proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which was carried unanimously.

April 4, 1881.

C. E. STEPHENS, Esq.,

In the Chair.

THE CAUSES OF THE RISE IN ORCHESTRAL PITCH.

By Dr. W. H. Stone, M.A., F.R.C.P.

It was my pleasant duty to deliver a discourse at the Royal Institution, on Friday week last, on the general subject of musical pitch, and its mode of determination. Our excellent Secretary, who was there, was kind enough to say that he thought a practical application of the scientific principles then laid down might be interesting to this Society, and I propose to do what the short period allowed for lectures at the Royal Institution did not allow me to do, namely, to carry one degree further into the artistic department the principles then enunciated. It is no use, as was remarked to me by more than one distinguished musician present, telling us all this, unless you can give some rules by which to prevent discords and discrepancies. Now I shall endeavour to take up the tail end of that lecture, and fasten on it a still longer tail of a practical character. I have put up, however, the large diagram which served as a *resumé* in my former lecture, showing the methods of determining musical pitch. For many centuries there was no definite pitch; then the pitch settled down, and for a considerable period remained—during the time of Beethoven and Mozart, and many of our great writers—tolerably steady. With the increase of the orchestra—with the multiplication of the means of producing sound—there came a very rapid rise in pitch, and this rise has been so rapid that since the time of Handel, as has been shown by Mr. Ellis in his learned and valuable papers, it has gone up at least a semitone; nor is there any finality observable in this matter; it might seem as if the pitch would go on rising with the same expeditiousness from causes which are still in operation and which caused the present rise. We cannot go into that part of the subject. We have at last determined a standard. Of the various methods on the diagram, some of the latter seem so satisfactory

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that we may say that we have a pitch. We have a standard just as the French have their mètre; as the second is the measure of time; as there are now standards of electric measurement; so I think at last in some of the instruments here named, Scheibler's tonometer, Appunn's reed *tonmesser*, and Koenig's tuning-fork clock, we may be said to have a unit of measure like the British yard or the mètre.

Now, having this, what is the difficulty in applying it, and how can we best carry it out in practice? That is the text of my discourse. I have put on the table two of these instruments, because I shall have to refer to them further. A specimen of Koenig's tuning-fork clock has not yet reached this country, but Appunn's *tonmesser* and Scheibler's tonometer have.

In the first place, why all this trouble? What is the reason that the pitch should go up any more than that it should go down. It has been remarked to me in talking over the title of the lecture in a friendly way just now, Why is it that it goes up, and does not go down? And that is the first question I feel bound to answer. I have set up a small diagram there, in which I have named a number of causes—not that I mean it to be exhaustive—which, speaking as a player of some years standing (for I have been playing now in the Sacred Harmonic Society for about sixteen years), I consider as the most prominent causes of the rise of pitch. I have been told that no explanation is required, for if you go to many performances and listen accurately enough you will hear half-a-dozen pitches going together. That is perfectly true, but still some reason is needed to account for the fact that they shake down into agreement with those not erroneously flat, but those who are erroneously too sharp. The first and foremost cause is that which has been often named by Mr. Bosanquet and other mathematicians, viz., that true fifths are in excess of octaves. Remember your principal voice in the orchestra is the violin, and the violin is tuned to true fifths—to perfect fifths. The noises, of a somewhat dancing-master-like character, reminding us of school, are the tuning of these strings to true fifths without beats. The moment they are perfectly in tune they do not beat. Directly you add these together the octave is exceeded, and, it seems to me, the first step has been taken in the rise of pitch, a step which lies physically deep in nature, and which is not due to our own weaknesses. It is one of the many difficulties which arise from the incommensurability of the octave and the fifth, which is similar to the strange incommensurability between the diameter and the circumference of a circle. The amount has been fixed ever since the days of Pythagoras, from whom the quantity in excess has been named the Pythagorean comma; it is equal to ·23460 of a semitone, say between the fifth and fourth of a semitone; if you take twelve fifths, they are greater than seven octaves

by that quantity. Another way in which it may be taken more simply is that six major tones exceed an octave by the same quantity. I will pass that over without further comment. The very fact that the violins, excepting always the double-basses, which at present are tuned in fourths—and even these are liable to the same error in a less degree—are accurate and correct in tuning, causes them to exceed the octave, and thus they are already tending to get sharp.

Then comes the cause which is usually assigned; as an instrumental player myself, I come to this with a certain amount of feeling. There is no doubt that wind instruments do sharpen extremely with heat, and there is also no doubt that there is a very great difficulty in getting wind-instrument players going into a cold orchestra to properly warm their instruments before beginning. Therefore, even although they are a little flat at the beginning, they get sharp afterwards, and often will not confess it. But this does not apply to all wind instruments. All who have tuning slides can get out of the difficulty, and do so even whilst playing. You often see the horns, and even the trumpets, whilst playing pull at their tuning slides. Other instruments, however, are not so easily susceptible of tuning; the principal enemies are the flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons. In fact it is the wood-wind which is liable to this second difficulty—that of rising with heat. Now, as regards the heat, I think every musical man in the room will agree with me that the flute is by nature—by some inherent weakness—liable to be sharp. You very seldom hear the flute down to pitch. In fact, many of the greatest players deliberately state that they never will play down to pitch, and for this reason: the flute is not a powerful instrument, and as the late Mr. Pratten once said to me very frankly, "I have not the power of a clarinet, I have not the power of the oboe, but I must compete with them in some way or other." Having often sat beside that extraordinarily able player, I have noticed that when he had a prominent passage, when he was not covered by chords from other instruments, and when delicate dissonances were not liable to be overwhelming, he played as sharp as you like; but the instant he played in concert he came down again to harmony. The flutes can do this. The mere turning of the embouchure in and out will vary the tone quite a quarter of a note. I have an amateur friend who says he can play half a note sharp or flat.

Dr. Bridge.—Can he play in tune?

Dr. Stone.—I never heard him do so yet. We may dismiss the flute then. It is in their power to vary the tone. I do not think the flutes need trouble us. Then we come to the oboe, and this is a more difficult question. The oboe has from ancient times obtained the prescriptive right to tune the orchestra, and the reason of this no doubt is that in Handel's

time there was no other wind instrument. Sometimes he had two oboes, and sometimes twenty-six; the bassoon was only added later. The oboe is dependent to a great extent on the strength of lip of a performer. I dare say that many musical men here will bear me out in this, that an oboe-player will often begin sharp, and after a little while, although the instrument is sharpened by the heat of the air increasing, the muscular power of the lip fails, and on the whole the oboe has flattened. It is a most delicate and difficult instrument. It is one I confess myself beaten by. It requires a whole lifetime to keep it in order, and if out of tune it is beyond all bearing; that is due to the fact that the lip has to be most carefully maintained, otherwise the instrument is liable to go far away from the pitch to a degree not due to the physical causes I am speaking of. The clarinet, the third which I have named, is so important that I have drawn attention to it elsewhere, but I shall do so for a moment again. The rise in pitch of the clarinet with heat is enormous. It is so large that it has not been fully appreciated. Between the extreme cold of a day in winter and a hot concert-room it varies just a semitone. Now, we often hear musicians talk about a piano being half a note sharp, or a quarter of a note sharp, and generally speaking that means very much less, because the melodic appreciation of change of pitch is generally exaggerated; but with regard to the clarinet the rise of pitch is absolutely, as tried by rules I have properly worked out, what I have stated. Owing to the difference between a cold frosty night and a hot concert-room, a clarinet in B flat may become an A clarinet. I have heard it, and I could show it to you. Lastly, the bassoon, being an eight-foot tube, is not so difficult to manage. Of course, if the instruments are extremely cold they cannot be got up to pitch, but with any reasonable care on the part of the player you may bring all these larger instruments which do not suffer so much from small variations in their length of tube into harmony. Practically, the great difficulty rests with the clarinet. I frankly admit that one great cause of the rise in pitch is the rise of wind instruments generally with heat, and especially prominent among these is the clarinet. The horns and trumpets of course make the notes by ear, and the trombones can all be dealt with. It is only this small section of the band, the wood-wind, which is making all this difficulty so far as heat is concerned.

The third point, which I have not been able to explain at length, although I have put it down, is the difficulty of hearing slow beats. I will not trouble you again with the whole question of beats, but accurate tuning can only be done by beats. The melodic appreciation of pitch is very vague and very feeble. Beats, of course, are the differences of the vibration numbers of the notes beating, and Scheibler and Appunn have

shown how from the relative beats of these two notes absolute pitch can be obtained. But that is not my particular object to-day. I wish to point out that unison tuning is not so accurate as tuning to a definite number of beats, and orchestral tuning is essentially unison tuning. This was found out by Scheibler, and Mr. Ellis has narrated it very well. Scheibler ceased attempting to make his tuning-forks in unison, because the slow beats were inappreciable, and deliberately used tuning-forks four beats out and tuned to the difference: they could be easily counted by a clock. But that you cannot do in the orchestra. You must attempt unison. Now, one beat in a second is not appreciable in the noise of a concert-room, and from the tendency of human nature to be prominent, to stand out above its fellows, that little difference of unison is generally taken by the player on the side of prominence, and he tunes that small quantity sharp. Here again is a natural cause of rise in pitch.

Then comes the physiological point, which I have put down as number four—the predominance of sharp notes. If two notes are sounded in the same room, and one is a shade sharper than the other, even the most musical amongst you—even Mr. Stephens, I believe—would be tempted to choose the sharper note. It is a curious fact that the sharper note attracts attention more quickly and more distinctly than the flatter note; hence the tendency of conductors in an orchestra to say, "You are too flat." I believe a great deal might be done by saying to the other players, "You are too sharp"; but that I will come to presently. The difficulty of hearing slow beats is this: If a standard be taken which beats a certain number of times a second, it will be very easy to say whether that number be fulfilled or not. For instance, here I have a watch which beats four times a second. I have only to take four beats of the second hand and compare them with the sound of these tuning-forks; it is very easy to make the comparison. But suppose I have a slow repeated beat, one in a second or in a second and a half, it is very difficult to know exactly how often it occurs. Yet that little difference in the particular instrument above the rest is quite sufficient to give it enormous predominance, and sufficient to determine a gradual pulling up of the band to that sharper note. So each man goes on overtopping his neighbour and, the process being continuous, tends to raise the pitch.

Now beyond this there is something more to be said. It may seem rather a paradox, but I think I can prove it physiologically, that different ears make different estimates of unison. Unison should be an absolute fact, just as the boiling or freezing point; and we know how those two physical facts are influenced by a number of circumstances. I believe the acuteness of the ear varies, and that what one man would call unison another

would not call unison. No doubt real unison exists all the while, but according to the thinness and accuracy of a particular tympanum as compared with another, different persons do not possess quite the same appreciation of unison. Here we have another cause still of sharpening, which perhaps may require a little proof. The first proof that ears are liable to be mistaken in unisonous notes was given some years ago by Mr. Hipkins. If two pianofortes in Broadwood's rooms are exactly tuned by beats, which is the only accurate method of tuning, and one has a soft hammer and a full quality tone, and the other a hard hammer and rather an acute quality of tone, the best musicians will come into the room and declare that the soft tone is the flatter of the two, although they are by the only mathematical method of measurement absolutely in unison. To show you how insensitive ears may be to differences of pitch, I will mention what will be in the recollection of several of you. Many of you were doubtless present when the Toy Symphony of Romberg was played at the Promenade Concerts, and repeated over and over again as part of an interesting concert of comical music, such, for instance, as Mozart's Musical Joke—which, though a joke, is a magnificent composition. It appeared from the tonometer that all through the performance of the Toy Symphony the toys were at the French pitch, whilst the orchestra were at the English pitch, and nobody found it out—that is to say, there was nearly a semitone difference. I mentioned it afterwards to a friend, whom I advised to take a tuning-fork, and tell me if the nightingale and cuckoo were not at French pitch. They were; there was a difference of nearly a semitone, and yet that large band calmly went through the Toy Symphony without the least idea that they were in dissonance nearly half a tone. It was a pity the thing was not done in tune, because there is a singularly beautiful effect produced out of one of the toy instruments in the slow movement. It only speaks a single note, but that note happens to come in very beautifully, like the one note of the singer in the "Son and Stranger," which is made to do such wonders. That effect is lost by this pretty instrument being half a tone too flat, and yet nobody seems to have discovered it.

So far I may say I have dealt with the destructive part of my argument, and now the point is, What can we do? What should we not do? Of course when there is any question of pitch our ancient friend the tuning-fork comes to the front, but each man has his own tuning-fork, just as he has his own dog or his own cat; and these tuning-forks are perfect, and have no error, and never can by any possibility be wrong. But, even putting aside prejudice, the tuning-fork is too feeble for tuning purposes in an orchestra. Indeed, the tuning-fork is hardly dealt with fairly. Helmholtz has noticed how very pure and

free from harmonics is the tone at the best, but as we generally use it its tone is damped to an astonishing degree. I have mounted a tuning-fork here to show the difference which can be made between a tuning-fork properly used and one unfairly dealt with. If I put it in the ordinary way on the table and strike it, it has a very feeble note indeed. If I let it vibrate properly by holding it differently, you hear a very coercive note. Put it on the table or on the floor, and it is immediately dumbed. We do not do our tuning-fork justice by not allowing the resonance box connected with it to vibrate freely. There is only one point in the tuning-fork, the point of least motion, which is almost stationary, just below the prongs, which should be mounted, and the box should be allowed to be quite free. I think an orchestra could be fairly tuned from a tuning-fork so dealt with; but at the best the sound of a tuning-fork is feeble, it contains very feeble harmonics, and is not therefore very liable to beat. Again, it requires special training to deal with it. Many good tuners cannot take a note from a tuning-fork. I was the other day at Hill's factory to tune an organ, and the voicer, whom everybody knows to be excellent, can make the note of two organ pipes speak accurately together, but he could not hear the tuning-fork—he declared the tuning-fork was in unison when it was not. I am saying no harm of him, because every one knows his ability, but not being accustomed to a tuning-fork he said it was in tune, when I, having had a little more practice with tuning forks, could hear two beats a second going. It was simply from want of practice. Therefore a tuning-fork, however valuable in a quiet study for the physicist, is not well-suited for the noise of an orchestra, and the unpractised ears which will have to listen to it. What can we replace it by? Here I may say that every other source of sound except the tuning-fork and the free-reed may be put aside as too variable and uncertain. The variations in tuning-forks have been investigated, and I agree with Mr. Ellis, that no other source of sound is, to anything like the degree of those two, stable. According to his investigations the tuning-fork will vary about one in 16,000 vibrations for 1° F. That is nothing. A reed will vary one in about 10,000 vibrations, and that still remains very far inferior to anything that is needed in the orchestra. Therefore, we have two to choose from, the tuning-fork and the reed; and I should decidedly say, on account of the coercive nature of the reed, on account of the harmonics it is accompanied by, and the predominance of beats, let us by all means have the reed.

But how is this reed to be properly applied? Of course here in Scheibler's *tonmesser* we have a record of any pitch we require. Any pitch can be taken throughout the range of the octave. But, unfortunately, if conductors were allowed to

manipulate so many tempting little handles, I am afraid they would be liable to yield in one direction, and not to keep to one pitch; therefore I am inclined to think the better plan would be to cut down these sixty-five reeds to one, or at most two, and that reed to be mounted in an invariable way, so that it could not be interfered with. These things already exist. Here is another form in a tube, and here is one called the Æolian pitch-pipe, which can be varied by means of a slide shifting the length of the reed. But the moment you have the power of altering, it seems to me we lose our standard. If the haberdasher could say, "How long a yard would you like, ma'am?" I am afraid very few ladies would go to that shop; and I fear that, with a variable reed, we should be apt to get too sharp in the same way as now. Such a standard is very easy to construct; indeed, I am now in the act of constructing a series of reed tonometers which shall be accurately true. The temperature should be kept within moderate limits, and the influence of varying pressure of wind should be as much as possible warded off. In the meanwhile here is one which I think will strike you as being sufficiently coercive for an orchestra. It is easy to show you that the beats with such an instrument are very audible. I will sound A on the clarinet, making it purposely a little flat, and I think you can see that players in an orchestra could not stand beats like that. Even as the instrument warms the beats alter. If the conductor used such a beat the most obstinate of instrumental players could not fight against it. As I vary my blowing the beating becomes so intense and intolerable it would be impossible to escape from it. If this is not absolutely the best, it is a very near coincidence with it, and may be called the second best test, and by it I think we shall be able to get out of the difficulty. Now, let us try with the tuning fork. It is more or less in tune with the clarinet; it is not quite in tune; but it does not hurt your feelings; it is not so frightful as the want of coincidence between the reed and the clarinet. In a reed judiciously used we have a standard pitch which cannot be departed from, and which will even bring clarinet-players to reason.

There is one more thing which deserves notice before I come to my last suggestion, and that is that the instruments themselves are not in tune; and really I have never yet seen a clarinet sent out which is in tune. The flute is somewhat better, but oboes and bassoons are very bad. I have adopted a method of tuning myself in which the parts are inverted, which is, perhaps, an improvement on the usual mode. The usual rule is to take a good measure of pitch—a series of reeds, such as I have here, or tuning-forks—and tune the tempered octave of tones of the instrument to it. But the converse is possible, and is much more delicate. Instead of tuning the

instrument to the tuning-fork, play the instrument until by consonance the tuning-fork speaks. The effect is very curious. I mount this tuning-fork in the far part of the room, and take the clarinet or bassoon; as long as the clarinet is out of tune there is dead silence on the part of the tuning-fork, but the very moment the note is right the tuning-fork sings out loudly. It is quite possible to show that. Here is an A tuning-fork, and here a clarinet: on sounding this it is quite within orchestral limits of tune, but now I have flattened the instrument intentionally a little bit, and the tuning-fork does not sound at all. I warm it a little more, and the moment it is in tune with the fork the latter speaks at once. Now, that mode of tuning, setting up your tuning-fork and trusting to the consonance of the tuning-fork for the accuracy of pitch is, I think, a step further in the right direction, and enables you to tune a little more accurately than has hitherto been done. I have one suggestion, lastly, for making this practical change, and that is that some society or institution, such as the Musical Association, should take the lead in this matter. Somewhere or other there ought to be established a means of pitching or tuning instruments, like that which is establised for weights and measures under the Warden of the Standards. We do not want, as somebody mentioned to me just now, the interference of a despotic government. It could all be done after the English fashion, quietly amongst ourselves. Let it be understood that there is some place at which a standard series of tuning-forks or reeds, which I prefer, is kept, and that instrumentalists can go without charge, or at some moderate charge, to have their instruments tested and tuned—as thermometers are tested at Kew, and as the Warden of the Standards tests standard pounds and yards, and surveyors' chains—and they will be obliged to go and have their instruments corrected for the sake of their reputation, and so we shall get out of the difficulty.

DISCUSSION.

The Chairman.—Ladies and gentlemen, I am sure you will all agree with me that we owe Dr. Stone many thanks for his great kindness in presenting such an interesting lecture to us. I see some gentlemen present who will no doubt favour us with a few remarks. With regard to myself, I must say the experiment shown us as to the difference between reeds and tuning-forks is very satisfactory, inasmuch as the tuning-fork, to my ear at least, manifestly sharpens in pitch as the sound dies away.

Dr. Stone.—It does a little, but very little.

Mr. Ellis.—Not perceptibly.

The Chairman.—To me it is very plain.

Dr. Stone.—Of course it apparently rises, but that is partly owing to the higher harmonics coming out more plainly as the sound dies away.

The Chairman.—There is to me obviously a rise in the pitch as the sound dies away; and therefore, admitting what Dr. Stone says, that it is a slight one, it confirms what he says as to the preference being given to the reed. I can also confirm what he says about the little uncertainty in one's own feeling with regard to pitch, for I remember on one occasion, when I had suffered from a very severe cold, on my recovery I found to my great dismay that I heard a different pitch with my two ears, and it was a long time before that got right. You can imagine the distress I felt during that time. If that applied to an individual in the two ears, it is very clear that one individual may be so constituted as to hear a pitch quite differently to another. I think Dr. Stone's remarks tended to that extent—that it was quite possible that such an anomaly might exist, that two persons would hear a different pitch at the same time. With regard to the sharpening of certain instruments in the orchestra, we must take into account that there is a tendency on the part of stringed instruments to flatten, which one would suppose to some extent would counteract the influence of the wind instruments rising. Perhaps he will kindly deal with that subject in his reply. It is quite true that they can sharpen as they go on.

Dr. Stone.—They do keep retuning, but there is a perpetual tendency to fall.

The Chairman.—There are two classes of stops in the organ, one of which rises, and the other falls through heat; so that there is a counteracting tendency in that case. But Dr. Stone has chiefly dealt with the orchestra. I am sure there are some gentlemen present who will be able to say much more on this matter than I can.

Mr. A. J. Ellis, F.R.S.—To take the last point first—with regard to the apparent sharpening of the tuning-fork, as the one dies away, I do not know whether you decidedly notice that you scarcely hear the fundamental tone—after a short time. The octave is then heard, and then the twelfth becomes the principal sound. I think that the thinning of the tone in consequence misleads the ear. That it does not sensibly alter in forty seconds I think I am pretty well justified in saying, because all my experiments on Scheibler's own forks were made for a period of at least forty seconds each, and the counting was absolutely correct. Now that could not have been the case if the sharpening had taken place. That is the reason why I think the ear is misled by the alteration in the quality of tone.

Dr. STONE.—The Chairman was rather speaking of the effect on the ear with respect to the tuning in the orchestra.

Mr. ELLIS.—As a matter of fact, I think it really does not sharpen. I observed on this matter on another occasion, when I showed two forks which were very nearly in pitch together, but were of different qualities, that the persons present were about equally divided as to which was the sharper. The difficulty was entirely due to being misled by the difference in quality of tone. The tuning-fork has not such a pure tone as Helmholtz at first imagined. I can always get out of any tuning-fork the octave by putting it before the proper resonance cavity, and on some tuning-forks I manage to get the twelfth as well; and Mr. Bosanquet has said that on large tuning-forks he has got as far as the seventh partial tone. Besides that, you have a number of inharmonic partial tones, which tend to confuse the ear much as the sound dies away. Therefore it is not at all convenient for use in the orchestra; but there is no instrument at all comparable with it for the purpose of settling pitch, or determining minute varieties of pitch. The tone of a reed itself is so compound and rough that it is very curious to observe the effect of the beats. The beat is an extremely complex one. I have had to count Appunn's instrument for hours together, for days together, and therefore I know it perfectly well; and in listening to it it is necessary, in order to be accurate, to wait until you hear the beat of the fundamental tone, and disregard the beats of the other partial tones. The beat of the lower tone is a bell-like beat; and when you take notes which beat in the fifth, it is really the twelfth of the lower note which beats with the octave of the upper note, and you can also hear that beat as a bell-like sound. In measuring these lower notes—and the tenor and bass instruments can go down to a double bass as low as eight vibrations in a second—I was able to count as low as twelve vibrations in a second with great certainty, entirely by taking the upper partial tones, sometimes as high as the twentieth or thirtieth which exist in these low reed tones. The consequence is, there is a real and very great difficulty in determining the octave which you are hearing. You constantly hear the higher octave instead of the lower one; and persons imagine, in sounding the low reeds, that they have heard much lower tones than they really have heard, because they hear the octave or twelfth above it. I agree with Dr. Stone entirely that the reed is the best thing for the orchestra to tune from. That tunes in unison, but I also am perfectly certain that it is quite impossible to tune a unison; you can only approximate to it.

Dr. STONE.—You do not suggest that an orchestra should tune to four beats.

Mr. ELLIS.—It must be tuned inaccurately to unison. Extreme accuracy is not a thing to be thought of in practical

performances, for you could not keep it for two seconds together, if you got it.

Dr. Stone.—Whereas the natural beats of a reed are sufficient to make anything out of unison perfectly unbearable.

Mr. Ellis.—I quite agree; I was only speaking of the scientific part of it. With regard to slow beats, the slowest I have ever been able to count was once in twenty seconds. It was two tuning forks which were tuned to be in unison together. They had been tuned by four beats, but there was that one beat in twenty seconds. It was very difficult to count. You know that persons do not listen for twenty seconds generally; there were five seconds of absolute silence, then there were fifteen seconds of a note which you could not tell whether it varied up or down at all. It seemed to be a blank and a dash; a blank and a dash. It was certainly a very remarkable fact. I never cared to go through the labour of hearing them a second time; but I worked them out on two occasions in one day, and that was sufficient to establish the fact. Now regarding what Dr. Stone has said as to these four points, I admit every one of them; but I think that is not the whole of the reason why we have risen in pitch so much during the last fifty years. We must recollect that for 200 years before that time pitch hardly varied at all. Now that is quite a remarkable phenomenon, which has been brought out by the results of experiments and observation which I have made on old instruments, old forks and organs, and sometimes organ-pipes which I had constructed according to measure. The variation was trifling—a comma more or less—and a comma more or less might reasonably arise from any of these circumstances. But such a very great rise happening so suddenly as this rise of more than a semitone, that has already taken place since the time of Handel, I do not think can be attributed entirely to these circumstances. I believe those circumstances can do very much and very markedly as to the variation of pitch in the course of one evening, or the pitch in one band; but they are not the things which tell generally upon the musical world. At any rate we have a number of facts which I have brought forward in my history of musical pitch, which have shown certain particular reasons for a rise of pitch at particular times and places. The rise in pitch began in 1816 at Vienna, and it spread from Vienna very slowly through Germany. In 1813, when the Philharmonic Society was established, the pitch was the same as Handel's, for we have a copy of the fork, preserved at Broadwood's, with which Mr. Peppercorn tuned the piano first used at the Philharmonic, and kept on tuning it to 1820. That is Handel's pitch precisely, or as nearly as possible, tuned in an unequal temperament then. Broadwood's did not think of tuning in equal temperament until 1840. The rise at Vienna arose, as we

have historical evidence, from the presentation of new wind instruments to two household regiments at Vienna; and it being the custom for the bands of the theatre there to reinforce themselves by military instruments when occasion required, the managers found themselves in a very great fix, for out of the three home regiments at Vienna there was only one left that could play in tune with the orchestra; and then of course the orchestra rose; but the rise was not adopted generally in Germany.

Dr. Stone.—That is reason number three—instruments being too sharp.

Mr. Ellis.—The second band was a little sharper than the first; both sets of instruments were made by Koch at Vienna; and this pitch gradually spread through Europe, but it was a long time before it got as far as Dresden. Then it rose up in France, and they were so frightened at the great height of the pitch in Paris that they got this new pitch made, though they were not nearly so high as we are at present in England. They have now got a little bit beyond the English in America. I recently had an account of American pitches, which was not in time for my book, by which I find this. I mentioned that Steinway uses a sharper fork, which I got here in London; but there seem to be two or three American forks for pianos which are still sharper, although they had the French pitch several years ago. The French pitch, you will observe, is the pitch which Smart introduced when he sharpened his own pitch, and that was the utmost sharpness which he would allow of. It was known as Smart's pitch in England for a long time before the *Diapason normal* was constructed, but it happens to be identically the same. Then in different orchestras there have been several curious things related with regard to the sharpening of individual instruments. Dr. Stone said that players liked to make themselves more prominent, and that the sharper tone is the one that strikes the ear most. It is more penetrating, and no doubt it is heard better. Orchestral players seem to have laid to heart the Homeric maxim—

Αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπέρτερον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων.

which may be put into the English jingle—

Always be best,
And top the rest.

There was a curious case in Paris of that kind. They had flattened the pitch to accommodate a singer whose voice was a little *usée*, and one of the orchestra could not endure it; so after a while he quietly sharpened his instrument, and the others rose up to it without anything being said. Therefore, while I think that all these things are quite true, and that

excess of the twelve fifths over the seven octaves may possibly be one cause of it, yet it cannot have much effect, because the violins can always accommodate themselves by stopping, especially if they carry out the rule which used to be laid down, never to use the open string except for the lowest note; so that they are always able to stop in tune. The rise of wind instruments with heat is very great. Of course wind instruments would include the organ, where the rise is something frightful. The organ was excluded from the paper; but where, as at the Crystal Palace or Exeter Hall, the band plays with the organ and the organ rises so enormously with heat, it is very trying to the instruments altogether. I recollect Bryceson telling me that he had been sent for during a rehearsal at St. James's Hall, when they said:—"We cannot play with the organ at all, it is so dreadfully flat." But he had merely to say:—"Wait until the evening, and it will be all right." Of course it was all right when they heated it up, as they did under the old arrangements. I believe it is better now with the sunlights; but Bryceson said they had often 130° F. in the organ gallery: that is only for the evening. I do not think that is sufficient to account on the whole for the very great rise that has actually taken place. The difficulty of hearing slow beats is, of course, an important thing; for if people could hear them well they would hardly ever listen to an orchestra at all. When I have shut my ears to the music, and listened only to the sound, if I may make that distinction, I have been surprised at the enormous quantity of roughness which you hear in an orchestra, owing, of course, to the want of unison amongst those notes which ought to be in unison, and to their upper partial tones. I quite agree with Dr. Stone as far as he has gone; but I do not think he goes far enough to account for the actual state of things. Dr. Stone said that he is working now to get the instruments, especially the wood instruments, originally made so as to be possible to play in tune. That is a very important thing, and I am very glad he is working that out, for it is an extremely difficult subject. He mentioned that he had known one flute-player who could play half a note sharp or flat, and that reminded me that Delezenne, who some years ago began a collection of flutes and other instruments for the purpose of determining the history of pitch, finally gave up flutes altogether, for he found that practised players could make a semitone difference by the method of blowing them, and therefore they were no record, within a semitone, of the pitch actually produced. Again, of course, there is the old pitch, which Dr. Stone did not allude to at all—the old difference between the church pitch and the chamber pitch.

Dr. Stone.—Was that orchestral?

Mr. Ellis.—It was orchestral.

Dr. STONE.—There was no orchestra in those days.

Mr. ELLIS.—It was hardly an orchestra—it was a quartet; but they played together, and the difference was always a tone or a minor third, or some definite interval, so that they could play together by means of transposition. Then so lately as a very few years ago, at Madrid, they had that difference between the cathedral organ and the orchestra of the opera of exactly a semitone, in order that they might be able to play together on *festas*. I am very glad to find how Dr. Stone is working out this subject, and I am delighted at this way of mounting the tuning-fork. I have not mounted such tuning-forks myself, but I have been very much in the habit of holding the tuning-fork on the resonance-box in my hand, with the mouth of the box near my ear. By that means you hear the sound wonderfully well, and lasting a very long time. Of course there is a very great deal in the resonance-box; and I find, if I put its mouth too close to my ear, as one was apt to do, I could almost damp it, and the question was whether I did not flatten it a good deal; but the amount of flattening, if any, is very small indeed—it does not come to a vibration a second, although it exists to a certain degree. My notion was to have a standard fork four beats below the pitch you want to give, and to have a reed verified before the performance by means of that, which is very easily done. That reminds me of another point—that the reed is very loud, and dominates over the fork altogether. Dr. Stone mentioned about the difficulty that Hill's tuner had in hearing a beat with his ear; but that was because his ear was close to the organ-pipe, and not close to the fork. I have had to take the pitch of organs by little hand-forks over and over again, and the only way in which I found I could do it practically was to go thirty or forty feet off.

Dr. STONE.—Organ-tuners always go to the end of the room. But that is part of organ-tuning, which is a larger subject.

Mr. ELLIS.—With regard to the reed, when the fork was placed beside the reed it was too close. Your ear should be much nearer to the fork than to the reed instrument. I found, by putting the fork close to my ear, I could determine the pitch of most organs, standing thirty or forty feet off, and I have been able to hear the beats and count them with the greatest accuracy.

The Rev. THOMAS HELMORE.—I am tempted to venture a few words on this subject, with reference to voices. My friend Dr. Hullah thinks the study of music should be conducted, in the first place, through the voice: and I think, if all those good clarinet-players, and people who play in bands, were from early infancy trained to listen more attentively than they do, the precision of pitch would be much greater than it is at present. With regard to the tendency to sharpen, I may say that I have had a great deal of experience in

hearing uncultivated voices in village choirs, town choirs, and all sorts of choirs, and I find, generally speaking, unless my ear is very inaccurate, the tendency of men is to sing a little flat; it may be from fatigue, but they will sing year after year almost a quarter of a tone flat, and not know it, because their attention has not been called to it. On the other hand, I find female singers always sharpen, it may be from the vigour with which they sing, and probably from that same feeling which Mr. Ellis spoke of, of trying "to top the rest." As a sharp note makes the voice more distinct and more impressive, the tendency is to sing sharp. With regard to the desire which Dr. Stone mentioned of humanity to push itself forward and to be heard more than other people, I can only say this, that with regard to some of my singers, with very loud voices and very poor ears, when I have been attempting to train them in singing, they have taken a note, and it has been sharper than the one I have gone to. Then I have given them the note they were singing; and they have immediately gone a semitone higher. I think what we have to do in orchestras and everywhere else is to teach people that the ear is a very delicate thing, that it is in very great danger of being deceived, and that by paying more attention to this subject, both boys and girls, and men and women, would appreciate tone much better than they do at present.

Mr. Blaikley.—There are one or two points I think I might allude to with appropriateness, being practically engaged in the manufacture of instruments. I think with regard to the sharpening, owing to the excess of true fifths over octaves, it undoubtedly must have a decided influence; but I think also that, within the limit of an octave, it is very easy to get a little in excess of the true pitch in this way. The violin, of course, is tuned in the key of D, and the flute corresponds. The flute and violin sound D and the A as a perfect fifth. The A clarinet is tuned to the A string of the violin, or the A of the flute. The C clarinet, if played, is tuned a minor third above the A, and that is already a comma too sharp, within the limits of an octave. Again, there is a tendency in all instrumental players, in ordering new instruments, to say to the manufacturer, "Be sure it is well up to pitch," and they will have it cut and cut again. You may take a little pains to persuade them, but it is no use. With the modern facilities of travelling, players travel about; they say, "That is all right for London pitch, but I may be in some other town, and I must have an instrument a little sharper, in case I am landed in a hobble when I get there." It is an exceedingly difficult thing for manufacturers to keep down the pitch to the standard, however much they may wish to do so; they are constantly asked to send out instruments sharper than the recognised pitch. I think that desire for convenience on the part of players, to

have their instruments sharper than the recognised pitch, has a good deal to do with it; because, by degrees, in the course of a generation, all instruments in use would be sharper, and they would start from that sharper point again.

Mr. Ellis.—There is one thing I forgot to mention with regard to reeds. Although a reed keeps well in tune in itself, it is apt to give suddenly. When I was a boy I played a great deal on the English concertina, and I have continually found a note go entirely, without any particular reason; and on this instrument of Appunn's I have found the lowest note lose two-tenths of the vibration in a second within a few months. There is no accounting for it; we do not know from what cause it arises. Hence the necessity for tuning a reed by a tuning-fork which is lower.

The Chairman.—Allow me to supplement what I said about sharpening in the fork by observing that, in the harmonium, the reeds are very much flatter when blown fully than when they are very lightly blown. That may be for the same reason as the variation in the tone of the fork.

Dr. Stone.—No, I think not. The harmonium reed has no fixed point in which each vibration begins. When it is blown with a strong wind it vibrates right down to the root, and therefore the amplitude of vibration, and with it, the length of the vibrator increases. The tuning-fork is not liable to the same difficulty, and therefore it is a decidedly better standard of pitch.

The Chairman.—I will now ask Dr. Stone to reply.

Dr. Stone.—I have really nothing to reply to. I understand Mr. Ellis to say that whereas these causes account for variations of pitch within a limit of time, the historical alteration in pitch is due to other causes as well. At the same time it is very singular that it should have been a steady rise. If it is due to other causes it might have had a variation in the other direction. As regards what Mr. Blaikley has said, I quite agree with him that the fear which a player has of being found anywhere with an instrument so flat that he cannot get up to pitch, has a great influence; this difficulty might be met if conductors would not always fasten on the sharper note and try to pull the others up to it. If conductors would say, "You are too sharp," instead of saying "You are too flat," we should very soon have got rid of a great part of the difficulty. I intended to have said when Dr. Bridge was here, and I will say it although he has gone—that only last week I was playing to his excellent conducting; a piano was brought very much too sharp, but he immediately ran up to the oboe-player and said, "You must get sharper; you are not following the piano." The man said, "I am up to the full pitch; I cannot get any sharper." He said, "I cannot go on unless you follow the piano."

The CHAIRMAN.—It is now our very pleasing duty to pass a vote of thanks, in which I am sure you will agree with me most cordially, to Dr. Stone for his very able and interesting lecture; and I therefore beg to propose it.

The vote of thanks was carried unanimously.

MAY 2, 1881.

W. H. CUMMINGS, ESQ.,

IN THE CHAIR.

ON SOME OF THE UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES OF STRUCTURE IN MUSICAL COMPOSITION.

By H. C. BANISTER, Esq.

MY subject may seem, in title at least, technical and formal rather than æsthetic: having to do more with that which is outlined and made than with that which is inwrought and felt; with body and shape rather than with spirit and essence. So sorry, however, should I be for it to be thought that I approach the consideration of the beautiful art which we all love, in any of its richly varied aspects, with the spirit of a pedant, or as seeming to countenance the notion that music may be made or constructed merely, without being felt or inspired, that I must at the outset, as the truest introduction to the specialties of my subject, as well as to place myself right with the art and with my audience, say emphatically that, in proposing to myself to deal with some of the underlying principles of structure in musical composition, I wish to speak of structure as the *expression* of *definite thought;* as the *result* of that thought; as having to do with the *form* that the thought *assumes*, rather than with the *shape* or *mould* into which it is *cast*. Architecture has been termed "the poetry of mathematics": that would not be said of *building*, which is not the expression of a poetical thought at all. So with music, the poetry of sound—or rather, perhaps, poetical feeling expressing itself through sound: the very form that it assumes is the resultant expression of the thought.

I have to speak of *structure:* now structure implies *workmanship*, and that may seem a prosaic term. But the word occurs in a unique passage of our English New Testament, in which Christian men and women are declared to be the Divine "*workmanship*, created . . . unto good works";* and that word "workmanship" is the rendering of the word

* Ephesians ii. 10.

(*ποίημα—poiēma*) from which we obtain our word *poem*. So that we have the beautiful and impressive thought—lifting the word "workmanship" out of all low, prosaic use—that a truly good and gracious man is a *Divine poem:* the refined expression of the Divine ideal of what is good and true, and that with the purpose of its being seen in a true and beautiful life. This, then, is what a *poem* really is: the expression of the ideal of a mind in which ideality works; the outcome of an effort to make that ideal actual; and need I say that an ideal should be of the beautiful, of the good, of the true? I feel this so strongly that, I confess, were I to write an opera, it would be to me very distasteful to write the music for the villain of the piece, or to write a drinking song, or any such expression of the vile, the low, the sensual. For these things—villainy, appetite, sordidness—have no ideal side; and it seems to me treachery to art and its high mission to endeavour to invest them with a glamour of attractiveness. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one!"* As Plato says: "The greatest of ignorances, if you will have me tell it you, is this: when a man, judging truly of what is honourable and good, yet loves it not, but hates it, and loves and caresses with his soul what he perceives to be base and unjust—this diaphony (discord) of his pain and pleasure with the rational verdict of his intellect I call the last of ignorances, and the greatest, because it is in the multitude of the soul's thoughts." This same ignorance he afterwards calls "the out-of-tunest of all;" and again, "the movement of sound, so as to reach the soul for the education of it in virtue (we know not how), we call *Music*." On which Mr. Ruskin remarks, "The Greeks only call 'Music' that kind of sound which induced right moral feeling ('they knew not *how*,' but they knew it did); and any other sound than that, however beautiful to the ear or scientific in composition, they did not call 'Music' (exercise under the muses), but 'amusia'—the denial, or desolation for want, of the muses."†

But now, taking this high ground, and assuming the æsthetic ideal and refining purpose of the divine art, we are to speak of "some of the underlying principles of structure," bearing in mind, to quote Mr. Ruskin once more, that "no great composition was ever produced by composing, nor by arranging chapters and dividing volumes; but only with the same heavenly involuntariness in which a bird builds her nest. And among the other virtues of the great classic masters, this of enchanted design is of all the least visible to the present apothecary mind."‡ By "apothecary mind" I suppose is meant the mind which can simply mix ingredients according to prescription: a process such as we should call conven-

* Job xiv. 4. † Ruskin's *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 83, 1877. ‡ Ibid.

tional and grammatical movement writing. But "enchanted design"—that must ever be our starting-point; that is *the* underlying principle without which all structure will fail to produce the "thing of beauty" which shall be "a joy for ever."

Music is a language to express what words cannot, or can but inadequately, express. As a language, it has its grammar, which is not our concern to-day. But it has also its *logic*, and its *rhetoric:* by these it sets forth reasonably, truly, in order; and effectively, persuasively, winningly, the ideal of beauty springing from the musician's mind. For when we speak of "enchanted design" as the first requisite for a composer, it is implied not only that the enchantment is to animate the design, but that the design is to regulate the enchantment. In other words, the design, however enchanted, must be in some way defined; and, for its presentment with any hope of arresting and enchaining attention, enlisting sympathy, kindling sensibility, must submit to the demands of law and order. As was declared in a far more momentous matter, "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets."* And when we speak of the *logic* and the *rhetoric* of music as regulating and guiding in the carrying-out of design, we are confessedly borrowing terms to express what are the "underlying principles" of those processes in musical structure which are *technically* described by such terms as movement writing, contrapuntal treatment, imitation, modulation, development, and the like.

Charles Lamb, released from irksome office duties, commiserated some of his old chums on their having their compulsory walk to the city daily. They retorted that he walked quite as much and as far as they. "Ah!" he said, "but then you have to *go to somewhere: I walk about.*" This "walking about," purposeless, designless, is just that which is so obviously the undisciplined weakness of so many musical writers, young and old. Many a young student has brought me a page of manuscript, and when I have asked "What is this to be?" the answer has been, "Oh! I don't know: just a little thing I thought of." Now, of course, with a young writer all allowance must be made for lack of maturity and decision of purpose; and it would be far from my wish to check such a one, in putting to paper even a casual undeveloped thought, to crystallise; composers, young and old, must do that. But I do always counsel them to form a design—and, I may add, to design a form; to know what they are going to write: whether a prelude, a sonata-movement, or any other form of composition. And I caution them against frittering their energies on "Pensées fugitives," "Album-leaves," and the like, without

* 1 Corinthians xiv. 22.

any stern self-discipline in the constructive art: any proving the validity by testing the workableness—the susceptibility of development—of any musical thought which has flitted across, if not sprung from, their minds. And, therefore, if their powers are not sufficiently trained to warrant their taking a *long* flight, let them at least throw their ideas into some form which has in it the germ of development and structure, such, for example, as a Minuet with a first and second part, and some concise working; and then, say, a Sonatina movement, involving the presentation of at least two principal subjects, in contrast, or in conjunction, or both. And, above all, let them remember that smallness of dimensions, limited extent of development, must not be held to excuse looseness of structure. The form is the same, and, within its own compass, as perfect in a Sonatina as in a grand Sonata. I have been astonished to hear a musician speak of the small Sonatas of Beethoven as a disgrace for Beethoven to have written—so exquisite in sentiment, so perfect in form, are they. A philosopher does not disgrace himself by speaking to a child, if he speaks pure philosophy in accurate, though childlike, language. A musician does disgrace himself when he addresses the vulgar and frivolous in flimsy and vulgar musical language.

A musical subject then, as I have suggested, is a thought to be treated, elaborated, illustrated, enforced, sustained by any or all of the appliances which are at the command of a musician. There are undoubtedly simple thoughts which, like lyrics, call for no development; only presenting themselves in neat rhythm and expressive harmony: that is all their structure: drawing forth the exclamation,

*That strain again! It had a dying fall.**

There are other short compositions which, like a Sonnet, are examples of intense, concentrated, climax-tending power. But we have rather to speak of that structural art which so arranges, and shapes, and works musical ideas, as to nerve them with power and bring out their fulness in the various forms of extended movement. But, however defined these forms may be, believe me it is only bad structural art, not "enchanted design," which will make imaginative thought seem square, because shaped. The imaginative thought may be not square, indeed, but unshapen, crude: and the structural art takes the crude idea—may be—and shapes it, *not* by *squaring* it, but by *rounding* it. As a popular naturalist says of a certain sea-shore: "It is composed almost entirely of flints of every possible form and shape, but all of them more or less rolled, and their edges worn off by the action of the water—for Nature never turns her work out square, always

* *Fall* means *cadence*.

round—so that of the sea may be strictly said that which is said in the Latin grammar of a restless dabbler in bricks and mortar: 'Diruit, ædificat, mutat quadrata rotundis' (it destroys, it builds up, *it changes square things into round*)" * ; with which agree the words of the eminent art-critic from whom I have before quoted: "Nature is all made up of roundnesses: not the roundness of perfect globes, but of variously curved surfaces. Boughs are rounded, leaves are rounded, clouds are rounded, cheeks are rounded, and curls are rounded: there is no more flatness in the natural world than there is vacancy. The world is round, and so is all that is in it, more or less, except human work, which is often very flat indeed." † I am always reminded, by that sentence, of Sterndale Bennett's beautiful Caprice in E major, with its curved, rounded passages. It is said that these were suggested to him by the unrolling and throwing off the folds of a piece of silk, or some such material; such an operation as may be witnessed on many a counter. Not a "poetical basis" of music this—a very prosaic basis, but a very poetical superstructure, reminding one of Mozart's saying about an unpoetical libretto: "Give me the words, and I'll put the poetry to them." Yes, we must in our structure imitate the process of the sea and of nature—turn square things into round.

But of course this is not all. We have not only to perfect, polish, and present in finished instead of crude form our thought, our thesis; but also to elucidate it by structural skill, effective setting, and consistent elaboration; to exhibit it as a good thought, a strong thought, a suggestive thought, a many-sided thought—for truth is many-sided, has many bearings, may be presented and viewed in many aspects. To change our metaphor of the flint rounded into a smooth pebble, it may be that the musical thought is rather a diamond with many facets, each scintillating with beauty. So far as the presentation of one idea is concerned, structural development consists in this: the ascertainment of the various forms which that one idea may reasonably and effectively take, and its presentment accordingly. I am inclined to claim for our art a pre-eminence—I had almost said a prerogative—in this versatile power of presenting the same idea in different aspects; not saying the same thing over again *ad nauseam*, but each time with a new interest. Herein, as I take it, lies the true power and philosophy of counterpoint, and the object of contrapuntal training and exercise: not in the *rules*—which may or may not, as variously enunciated, be reasonable and good—but in the habit of thought which it engenders and cultivates about the fertility, the wealth, of a germ idea, and in the polystructural facility which it imparts. And, therefore, herein

* F. Buckland's *Curiosities of Natural History*, Second Series, p. 156.
† Ruskin's *Elements of Drawing*.

lie the true power and philosophy of contrapuntal *treatment*, especially as exemplified in its highest culminating form—the *fugal* form. And this is the *rationale* of that *rule*, familiar to all students of fugue-writing, that the same passage must not appear twice in the same form. Iteration and reiteration there may be in musical composition; but in fugue, as the closest logical form, and the very concentration of accumulated power, that reiteration, albeit that it is constant and continuous, must not be tautological but multiform. The fugue seems to me interesting, not only for its own sake, but as the illustration of the method in which our earnest-minded musical ancestors sought out (*ricercare*) and found out what underlying principles should govern them and justify them in a lengthened composition. And therefore the *rules* of fugue-writing are, generally speaking, expressions of "underlying principles" of structural composition which, with modifications, are applicable to musical writing of all kinds. The fugue is not a fossil: it is rather an example of the "survival of the fittest." It is not wonderful that in the early strivings after artistic production the structural rather than the picturesque should occupy the minds of musicians. They addressed themselves mainly to the thorough working-out of one thought. But let it not be thought, though it has sometimes been said or implied, and is often assumed, that a fugue, because it is an embodiment of intellectual strength and skill, necessarily represses the emotional, or checks the fanciful. It was said of Dr. Chalmers that he possessed the affluent capacity of presenting the same truth over and over again in such varied forms that it hardly seemed to his hearers to be the same. Only on analysis, or review of the whole, was this discovered; and then the conviction would come—how *true* and how *rich* must be that which could be thus stated, restated, and illustrated, until it had thoroughly permeated the mind, without in any one of its presentations a suggestion of a flaw or a weakness! And yet assuredly there was no lack of tender persuasiveness nor of impassioned fire in that eminent man. The fugue-subject which can be so dealt with must be a true subject; and the fugue which so deals with it is a true fugue—it fulfils its mission. But I envy not the unsusceptible hearer who can listen to Bach's fugues—which are sometimes spoken of as though they were forty-eight mosaics, as hard and as cold—and not feel any stir of emotion at hearing, for instance, that in E major, Vol. II., as though entering some "hallowed fane"; or that in A flat of the same volume, and not feel it to be as notes

> That fall as soft as snow on the sea,
> And melt in the heart as instantly.

I might cite many others.

Not every musical thought, however, calls for or will bear this close treatment. A much more free manner of presentation—not so much the convincing, the elaborating, the logical, as the alluring, the illustrating, the persuading—is that which befits certain genuine and beautiful ideas. Young writers, fresh, or rather, let me say, not very fresh, from a course of fugal study, often are tempted to show their fugal and contrapuntal skill by applying that method of treatment to subjects which will not bear it and do not call for it. A fugal treatment of an unfugal thought, how *ungainly* is it, and how pedantic!

But there are many ideas which can be better set forth in some other way than the logical. Their truth or beauty can be exhibited by contrast with other ideas, or their consistency with them; by the nicety with which they fit in with other thoughts, all, welded together, forming a consistent whole, which by its consistency declares its truth. Or, taking another view, a series of consequent, contrasted, or connected ideas may be so linked together as to form a movement, and to express a train of thought; and here comes in the consideration of the forms of movement of a freer, more varied, if not more arbitrary, character than the fugue. In a fugue—at least, on one subject—the writer presents himself to us in the character of a man of one idea: a term which we sometimes use to designate narrowness, an ill-furnished mind; but which may no less be taken to indicate that strength, intensity, fixedness of purpose which animate and sustain in order to the accomplishment of some noble, worthy work. In the freer movement, of more modern growth and development, he rather presents himself as of varied and wide culture—emotional, logical, rhetorical in turns; or—shall I say?—he is rather in the character of a dramatist or of a novelist who presents varied characters and emotions and incidents in succession, and in their mutual bearings and inter-relationships, so as to awaken interest, expectation, curiosity, sympathy, as the plan is unfolded. The type of movement which is familiar to us of this kind is that often called the *sonata* form, being that in which the first movement of a Sonata, Symphony, or such work, is usually, though not invariably, cast. I would prefer using the, to some extent, self-explanatory term—the movement of continuity or development. I have no intention of again going over the ground traversed by Mr. Stephens in his paper on "Form," read before this Association nearly two years since The outline of the form of movement in question is well known to us all. But I venture to make a remark or two as to what may be termed the underlying principle of that particular form, which, as we all know, is a growth, an extension. We have it in the long movements of Schumann, Mendelssohn, Beethoven; more concisely it appears in Haydn and Mozart; we

trace it back to still briefer presentation in the works of Bach, Handel, Domenico Scarlatti, Paradies, and others. There must be surely something in the form which commends it, for it to have been thus adopted, in the main, by successive generations. No one would think that this was simply a case of "follow my leader"—a mere servile conventionalism. However Beethoven and others may have extended and elaborated it, and however he and other great masters may have *diverged* and given examples of other modes of development, they cannot be said to have ever abandoned this time-honoured form as effete, cramping, worthless. Speaking generally, they have found it adequate to the presentation of their ideas when those ideas were to be presented in the shape of instrumental movements at all. This, broadly speaking, I think will not be disputed, notwithstanding indications of some tendencies in Beethoven's later works to break the bonds somewhat, if bonds they be. There must surely be, I will not say *vitality*, for that cannot be predicated of a *form*, but eminent *rationality*, adaptability, and, I will add, elasticity, about a form which has thus commended itself to such a series of eminently independent, unconventional, and daring minds; and I think the reasons of this eminence are not far to seek. Briefly set forth, the movement under consideration may be stated as comprehending first and second subjects, with, of course, connecting matter, which, with some additional matter and a codetta, constitute the *first part*, terminating in the dominant major, if the movement is in a major key, or in another key, if the movement is in a minor; then the *second part* proper, or development, sometimes, though I think not quite happily, termed the *free fantasia*, built upon the material presented in the first part, with perhaps some additional matter, episodical or otherwise; and then the return to the original subject and key, in which key also the second subject follows; and then, sometimes at least, a climax and a coda. With various exceptions and differences in detail, with which we are familiar, this is I apprehend the form in question. And surely both logic and order, as well as analogy, will amply justify this method of structure. Surely there is an "underlying principle" herein embodied. What can be more natural, and according to the fitness of things, than that the propositions of the argument—for I am here taking our musical movement to be an argument—should be clearly laid down, thesis and antithesis, in their simplicity, first of all; then, shown in their individual and mutual bearings, ramified; and then the original propositions restated as established? The analogy is not perfect, but is sufficiently close for the purpose. Or, to change the illustration, take a three-act drama. Is it not the business of the first act to bring forward the characters, and, so to speak, state the plot—the situation; then in the

second act to involve these characters, and so to bring about incident upon incident as that the plot shall thicken; and then of the third act to unravel all the entanglements, mete out justice—poetical justice, at least—to those concerned; and terminate all with the sense on the mind that "all's well that ends well"? Similarly in a three-volume novel. I repeat that no analogy will be perfect between two different arts; but there is at least a sufficient analogy or parallel in the cases supposed to abundantly show the reasonableness of the form in question. At all events there is such a coherence of plan, such a progressive order about this structural form, that most assuredly it can never be permanently abandoned. No form will avail without life; but, just as the human form is adequate for all that man has to do here, and, still more, the "human face divine" never ceases to interest us, though in both these there is absolute uniformity, in conjunction with infinite and indefinable variety; all that is requisite being that it shall be, not a corpse, nor a waxwork figure, but a body and a countenance, animated by the breath of life, and by intelligence and heart; so the structural form of which we are speaking is not at fault if a work cast in that form be square and seem effete. Who can think for a moment that in Sterndale Bennett's G minor Symphony the composer felt trammelled by the limitations of a prescribed structure, from which he would gladly have escaped? Or who does not feel that Mendelssohn's "Italian Symphony" (I speak of the first movement in each case) is not as fresh, notwithstanding its orthodox form, as any similar movement by "Papa" Haydn himself? It may indeed be the case that this particular form may be too rigidly insisted on, almost as though departure from it necessarily entailed formlessness. This undoubtedly would be pedantry of the narrowest, most irritating kind, against which a spirit of rebellion might naturally set in. Not only are there other recognised and accepted structural forms, of which I shall speak immediately; but as the mind of a young writer expands, and independence of thought and feeling asserts itself—as assuredly it will and ought if the mind be anything worth, and not insensately servile—new forms, or at the very least expansions, modifications of, or diversions from these will be discovered, or at least tried, and should be welcomed by all lovers of progress, enlargement, and originality. Only let it be borne in mind that, on the one hand, a work is not to be regarded as without form simply because it is not in this or that more or less conventional shape; and, on the other hand, the departure from old or prescribed forms, if it is to win regard, must not be defiant nor lawless, but still under the inspiring influence of that "enchanted design" originally presupposed. Let each one conduct his argument or tell his story in his own way, but let there be an argument or a story;

let there be a start, a progress, a goal. That may fairly be demanded in a work of art destined for permanency.

I have hinted at the elasticity of this sonata form, as it is called; that is, its amenableness to exceptions, digressions, modifications, or expansions. Allow me to make a brief digression myself, to refer to an instance quoted by Mr. Stephens from one of Mozart's Sonatas in F, in the first movement of which, after the termination of the first part in C, the second part begins again in C with a new subject. (See "Proceedings" for 1879, p. 137.) Some other instances of the same kind were referred to; and in conversation Mr. Stephens has mentioned the instance to me as one which, if not unprecedented, should not be taken as a precedent. Perhaps not; but, after all, it simply presents itself to me thus: the closing in the dominant, prior to the free modulations and workings of the second part, is somewhat like a man journeying to some country retreat which he purposes to make his starting-point for a tour or excursion, for shooting, hunting, fishing, painting, geologising, or the like. But may he not, before he commences such vigorous work, just calmly survey the immediate locality to which he has journeyed? Just such a placid "look round" from—shall I say Dominant Lodge?—does Mozart have in the instance referred to before plunging into the somewhat agitated change of harmonies which immediately follows the quiet, reposeful little subject in C major.

To resume the main current of thought, however. There is another accepted structure of movements, the episodical form; either the simple form, without development or working, of which an example occurs in the middle movement of Beethoven's Sonata in G (Op. 79); or the extended form, which is termed a Rondo. There seems a special instinct of our nature appealed to in this form—the kind of grateful delight with which we revisit old scenes, or with which we meet with old and loved friends after separation. Peculiarly welcome and soothing is the sensation of each return to the subject in a Rondo, unless that return be very clumsily managed, or the subject itself be unattractive. There is less of tension of mind required in listening to this form of movement than in following the working of a movement of continuity, and therefore there seems special fitness in its being a frequent form for the final movement of a Sonata. Each return to the subject is a time of comparative repose; and the episodes, when not taking the form of developments, are, in their turn, like agreeable changes of scene. If, however, we take a *logical* analogy, the Rondo seems to be like an illustration of that kind of argument which, from various standpoints and by different processes, arrives always at the same conclusion. In the movement of continuity the composer takes an initial thought, and works it, and works from it. In the Rondo he works *to* it from a different

point; or if he works it or from it it is with the intention of returning to it in its original simplicity. The episodes in a work of fiction are hardly to be considered as analogous to those in a Rondo. If one of the characters in a novel relates a story, it is avowedly an interruption to the main current of the novel, though it may be ingeniously intended to throw a side-light on the character of the narrator. But in a Rondo the movement is avowedly made up of subjects and *alternations*, which latter are not interruptions, but integral parts of the whole.

Whether in the fugal form or the sonata form, however, it is not unimportant to observe that not only are there the smaller divisions of subjects and phrases, but also there is the larger outline of the movement, with its threefold division. As in the first movement of a Sonata there is the first part proper, terminating at the double bar; then the second part, or working; and then the return to the original key and subject: so, in a Fugue, there is a structure *and* a structure—the *fugal* structure and the *movement* structure, which I regard as a recognition of the general logical principles which underlie and justify the accepted structure of a movement of continuity. There is, of course, the exposition, in which tonic and dominant alternate; and then, by means of counter-exposition, &c., modulation of the *movement* is effected, leading to a more or less decisive close, marking the end of the first part—first act, if you will—of the movement. This is followed usually, like the double-bar of a sonata movement, by fragmentary or sectional working, with close *stretti* and other devices passing through keys rather than dwelling in any one; so that the processes of comment on and illustration of the material of the first part—the proper work of this second part—and of modulatory onward progress of the movement, are simultaneously carried on; and this contrapuntal progression through the keys leads back to the original key and, as in the sonata movement, to the original subject, *not* in its original mode of presentation, but with some quite different contrapuntal surroundings. This matter has been briefly touched on by myself elsewhere,* and has been more fully and, I need not say, most ably treated by our friend Mr. Higgs in his admirable "Primer." These structural devices are most easily observable perhaps in fugues of some considerable length, such as those of Mendelssohn for the pianoforte, and the larger ones of Bach for the organ.

And this correspondence between the structure of so strict a movement as a fugue and the free style of a sonata movement leads me to recur to my previous remarks about certain of the rules that are usually considered as appertaining

* In my *Text-Book of Music*, chap. xxvi.

specially to fugue-writing being really expressions of abiding principles which should underlie and govern, or at least regulate, all musical composition with any pretensions to structure. Thus, for instance, the well-known rule, that no shorter notes should be introduced in the course of a fugue than in the exposition, is only one outcome of the demand for consistency of character, self-containedness, unity of purpose, which should surely mark any continuous composition; and the almost collateral demand that that character shall be announced at the outset. Sterndale Bennett, I believe, used almost to insist upon the first bar, if not even the first chord, being thus indicative of the character of the piece. But he used to declaim very much against the pernicious abuse of the term "characteristic," so often made the excuse for all sorts of *bizarrerie*, whereas it should mean having a character, self-contained, and consistent. I remember casually showing him a MS. of my own, and saying, as I saw that he was reading down to a certain bar, "I think of altering that"; to which his immediate reply was, "Yes, it introduces a new character." Of course, in an episodical movement especially, contrast between the episodes is imperative; but it is a matter of nice judgment and feeling to obtain the happy union of contrast and unity.

Our survey of the principles which underlie structure, and which are exemplified variously in the fugal, the sonata, and the episodical forms, would be very incomplete, however, did we leave out of consideration those movements or structures which come under neither of these heads, which seem to elude classification, and not to be amenable to any of the ordinary *rules* which are given to students for the construction of movements—I mean *fantasias*. I say not the *fantasia form*, not because a fantasia should be formless, but because there is no one form which is even conventionally accepted as *the* form for a fantasia. But it by no means follows that the *principles* which I have touched upon are disregarded in that which, as its very name implies, is a work in which, unrestricted, a composer gives free play to his fancy. We started with "enchanted design" as the first requisite in a coherent composition. There surely may be, and should be, *that* in a fantasia, though the composer does not by any more definite name announce what that design is. Then we spoke of the presentation of an idea under different aspects, and of its development. Assuredly *that* is quite compatible with the fantasia; though often there may be interruption, arrest, diversion, instead of complete and consummated development. Then of contrast, obviously, there may be abundance in a fantasia. The only question that might seem to arise would be about coherence or consecution; and there might seem danger of a fantasia turning out a mere piece of patchwork. Undoubtedly there is that danger, and, in the hands of an

inferior composer, that is precisely what a fantasia usually does turn out, a mere stringing together of odds and ends, without connection or consistency. I am not speaking of the things called fantasias founded on one or more popular melodies simply linked together, and perhaps varied; but of the fantasia proper, of which we have a few noble examples, which exemplify the *free play* of an *orderly mind.* This is requisite to the writing of a true fantasia—that it shall not be the evasion of regulation and principle which comes from the mind being undisciplined, and which shall not affect to be too strong to be bound with fetters. A fantasia such as the noble one in C minor by Mozart is no wilful defiance of principles; it is rather a *drama*, with very varying emotions portrayed, in more or less rapid succession, even as every earnest human life—not fitful, or wayward, nor merely commonplace or purposeless—has its aspirations, its emotions, affections, hopes, disappointments, in sometimes rapid succession and unexpected alternation; but, amidst all these, the life itself has an "enchanted design," thwarted at times—diverted, but never destroyed. We do not see the purpose of all these vicissitudes until we review the life *as a whole.* And so must a fantasia be viewed. This surely, to a susceptible and receptive mind, is the impression thoroughly left at the noble conclusion, partly recapitulatory, of Mozart's Fantasia just alluded to: it is like the declaration that an earnest life-work has been accomplished; a triumphant summary and review. And this, in the hands of Mozart, was not merely a matter of passionate utterances, but of ordered structure, without a suspicion of erraticism.

Closely connected with this subject is that of Programme-music, as it is called, which seems to me to be simply an alliance for the time being of two arts going hand in hand; the musician saying to the poet—or rather, the poet of sound saying to the poet of words: "You have told your story in *your* way; I will now tell it in *my* way. Yours may be more definite than mine; but, maybe, I shall kindle sympathy, even where you have scarcely won it; at least we will show the sympathy of the two arts, or rather, that art is one, whatever its medium of expression." But upon this subject I must forbear to enlarge, as well as upon the cognate one of what is, to my thinking, most strangely termed nowadays the poetical basis of music, and the validity of music without some alliance with a sister art to insure that poetical basis; as if, forsooth, music itself were not one of the languages of poetry, according to any definition, if there be any, of what poetry is. But as this is a vexed question—very needlessly, I think—and hardly a *structural* matter at all, and as moreover I am most unwilling to raise or suggest any discussion on a side-issue, I forbear; only just venturing to lay it down most fearlessly that

no structure or form stands in the way of a poetical basis, rightly understood; and that no so-called or alleged poetical basis, or requirement thereof, atones for or necessitates formlessness, chaos, or disregard of the "underlying principles of structure," sometimes, I believe, called the *unities*, such as I have endeavoured, though so imperfectly, to sketch, though these permit of boundless and elastic variation to meet all requirements.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN.—Ladies and gentlemen, the first duty I have to perform is a most pleasurable one, and one which will be in consonance with all your feelings; that is, to give our thanks to Mr. Banister for the paper he has just read. I feel myself that it is one of the most beautiful papers which has ever been read to this Association. I think it has been so clearly and logically drawn up that we cannot but derive very great pleasure and satisfaction from it. If you please, the first thing we will do will be to accord to Mr. Banister our unanimous vote of thanks for his splendid paper.

The vote of thanks having been carried unanimously—

The CHAIRMAN said,—Our next business is to invite discussion on this paper. It has spread over such a very large field that there should be no difficulty in providing subjects for a large number of those who are present this evening. I will not occupy your time myself, as we have so many here who are able to speak on various branches of what Mr. Banister has touched upon; gentlemen who have read papers here before, and those who are provided with theories of their own, will be too pleased, I am sure, to have an opportunity of airing them now. I hope, however, you will not go away with the impression that it will be necessary for all to become such purists as Mr. Banister proposed, or that we shall not be free to set drinking songs, or the part of a villain; for if we do we shall never have another "Rigoletto," "Macbeth," or "Don Giovanni."

Dr. BRIDGE.—I have very little to say except to thank Mr. Banister for one observation he made with regard to a certain subject in which I have taken some little interest, that is with regard to the study of counterpoint. His deprecation of the statements which have been made, that the study of counterpoint checks the imagination, is, I think, very valuable, and I was very glad to hear it. Very often people have said to me, "So-and-so never taught us counterpoint, and does not appear to attach much importance to it." But it has been a very great pleasure to me sometimes to have pupils sent, even after they have been studying for a considerable time, to be instructed

in counterpoint; and I have never had one who really studied it properly who has not in the long run appreciated its many advantages, and admitted that without a course of such study his knowledge would have been incomplete. I am aware that is only a very tiny part of this subject, but, as Mr. Cummings said, there is something for all of us to say. I can only say, with regard to the paper, that I have listened to it with immense pleasure. I know from my own experience, which, as a student, is tolerably recent, that there was no subject on which I had so much difficulty in getting satisfactory information as upon that of form and structure in music. I may say, as a matter of fact, that I hardly knew anything about it even at the time when I thought I could write fugues. I really have learnt a great deal more about form since I have had an opportunity of attending these meetings, and hearing the admirable papers by Mr. Stephens and Mr. Banister, than I knew before; and if the Association does nothing else but provide these papers for its members, and for their friends and pupils, it will render an inestimable service to musical art.

Mr. G. A. Osborne.—I do not think that Mr. Banister, when he was speaking about those drinking songs, had at all in his mind those admirable songs to which you have alluded, Mr. Chairman; because those songs, and other compositions of that sort, have both the form and structure which constitute a composition such as we should expect from the eminent men who composed them. I have the misfortune, in one respect, to be one of those popular composers who give to the public drawing-room compositions. I certainly have no wish to find fault with those who have taken them up so cordially, and who have enabled me to live so comfortably and happily as I have done; but all I can tell you is that, although I am well known from these little musical effusions—which are thrown out to-day and are forgotten to-morrow, when they have served their purpose—yet I look back with the greatest possible satisfaction to the days when I took lessons from Fétis and Reicha in composition; and, as I have composed trios and sestets and overtures, I could not have done it without having had the study I had in Paris. I have read Mr. Banister's charming book with the greatest possible satisfaction, and there is scarcely a book on counterpoint at the present day that I have not read. At Novello's there are brought out works of the greatest possible usefulness—books by Mr. Higgs, Dr. Bridge, and Dr. Stainer. Look at all those magnificent works coming out day by day—I assure you I have gone over all those works, and read them now in the decline of my life as I read such works when I was a student. If I have any advice to give to a rising artist I would say, If you want to discipline your mind, and if you want to have form, the first thing you should do is to make yourself truly conversant with the

works of the great masters. There was some little truth probably in what Cramer once said to a pupil; he said, "Mind that you learn well how to construct a fugue, and when you have done it, then do not compose one." I do not at all agree with him, still I am giving you the advice of a very eminent man. I will not detain you further; but I really entirely agree with what the Chairman has said; I have scarcely ever heard a paper on music which has given me so much pleasure as the one we have just listened to.

Major CRAWFORD.—Speaking from the point of view of an amateur, I look upon a knowledge of form and, to a certain extent, a knowledge of counterpoint as being as indispensable to a person who studies music as an amateur, whether executant or otherwise, as it is for the professor. Almost all young ladies, and a good many young gentlemen, study music, but in a number of cases they have not the slightest notion of the form in the works which they play—consequently they do not reproduce the spirit of those works. They have, perhaps, a work before them which is an embodiment of all the form and all the science which Mr. Banister has spoken of, and they give us on the piano the notes but not the form. Therefore, I think every amateur, as well as every professional musician, ought to study the principles of form, even where there is no intention to carry them out in composition, otherwise he cannot rightly understand the music which he intends to interpret.

Mr. BARRY.—There is one thing I should like to ask of Mr. Banister. Towards the close of the paper he remarked that works which rested on a poetical basis often degenerated into formlessness. Now, I have had a great many works of this class to analyse, but I have never come across a work which is utterly formless; and I should be much obliged if anybody could put me in the way of finding such a work. They are frequently spoken of, but I have never met with them, and should like to see one.

Mr. HIGGS.—Mr. Banister's remarks have opened up an extremely interesting subject, and his reference to Mr. Ruskin brought to my mind more than one quotation from his exceedingly charming work on the "History of Modern Painters." Some years ago, when the access to books at the British Museum was not quite so rapid as it is at the present time, whilst I was waiting for some books, I chanced to take up a volume of Ruskin's "History of Modern Painters," and I was much struck and interested with something which seems to compare with what we have been told this afternoon. Ruskin, speaking of painting the Alps, says, "Snow is modified by the under forms of the hills in some sort as dress is by the anatomy of the human frame, and as no dress can be well laid on without considering the body underneath, so no Alps can be drawn unless its under form is conceived first and its snow laid on

afterwards." This seems to me somewhat pertinent to the matter of "the underlying principles of musical structure," especially to the matter of counterpoint. I believe the spirit of counterpoint—I do not mean the mere dry rules of counterpoint, but the spirit—will be found just as applicable to modern music when we regard it in that way as it ever was. The very same afternoon it was a singular chance that led me to take up a volume of the *Quarterly Review*, and skim an article on Apsley House and some of the paintings which the Duke of Wellington had acquired. The Duke of Wellington, it was narrated there, was very fond of telling an anecdote of a certain picture by Raphael which had been restored by an eminent French picture-restorer, who, in the act of restoring, removed successive layers from the back of the picture that the painter had painted. The first contained the figures drawn in skeleton, then in a second stage an outline of muscle environed the dry bones, and finally, at a third set-to, the folds and draperies had been superadded, so unsparing of labour was this great master of his art. I fancy we have here an epitome of what has taken place in the history of music as regards its successive stages. In counterpoint we have the skeleton, and in the successive developments of modern harmony we have the muscles and the clothing. I am glad to enjoy an opportunity of personally thanking Mr. Banister for the interesting and valuable paper he has read, and, I may add, for the exceeding kindness with which he has given us this paper.

The CHAIRMAN.—If there are no more remarks to be offered, it is my duty to bring the discussion to a close, once again thanking our friend for the splendid paper he has given us. It has struck me it will be of the greatest use when we come to read it. These papers, I know, get disseminated, not only amongst members of the Society, but they are very largely asked for in other circles; and this is one which I am sure is calculated to do a great deal of good. If it will induce the rising generation of musicians, whether they are to be executants, listeners, or composers, to study something of the underlying principles of form, it will do a great deal of good. It is a most important thing, but it is one which has been very much neglected, as Dr. Bridge told us just now, when he said there was really no work on the subject to which a student could refer a few years ago. We never have had this matter put before us in such a clear way until quite recently. It is the more important perhaps in these days, because this is an age of freedom, when everybody is so free that he does not want to be bound at all. This is an age of freedom in which we try to kick over the traces of every law and principle. It is so in music and in other arts: there is a very great effort to be grotesque or original—to be unlike everybody else. A little anecdote has just occurred to me, which I heard at the Arts'

Club. To the Exhibition held in America some two years ago, in Philadelphia, a painting was sent by an Englishman. Unfortunately, or fortunately, I do not know which, it was hung upside down in the room. A gentleman saw it as he walked along, and suddenly fixed on that picture, and said, "I should like to buy that picture." He went to the secretary, who was sitting in the room, and ascertained the price, and a little wafer was affixed to the painting to show that it was bought. The gentleman who told me the anecdote was over there on behalf of English artists, and walking round the room he saw that this picture was hung upside down, and called attention to it, when it was turned the other way. By and by the gentleman who had bought the picture came back, bringing some of his friends to see his purchase. When he looked at it he said, "You have changed the picture." "Oh, no," said the secretary, "it is the same picture." The gentleman said it was nothing of the kind. The secretary assured him it was the same, only it had been hung upside down. However, the purchaser said he did not like it, and would not have it; it was not the picture that he bought. The picture was returned to England, and the story told in the drawing-room of an eccentric lady, she said, "I should like to see that picture;" and when she saw it she bought it, simply because it had been hung upside down. There is a certain section of people who like things because they are *bizarre*, and do not apparently conform to any rules.

Mr. Charles Stephens.—It was only an inversion of the subject.

Mr. Banister.—First of all, I have to thank the Chairman for the very kind way in which he has spoken, and I have to thank you for the very flattering expressions you have given with regard to my paper. I really have nothing to say; I almost thought it was the same with regard to my paper, that you had nothing to say; and there might have been two explanations of that: either that the paper was so unsuggestive, or a much more flattering one — that it had been exhaustive. I only wish to correct one entire misapprehension on the part of Mr. Barry. What I was saying was not that there are works on a poetical basis which are formless, but rather that I protested against an idea which is sometimes enunciated, and is very prevalent, that to take a poetical basis, as it is termed, necessitates formlessness. I said it is not so. If you take such works as the beautiful "Paradise and the Peri" of Bennett, we see examples in which this poetical basis does not lead to formlessness. I only spoke of a dictum which is often uttered. Perhaps I did not express myself quite clearly. I have only, in conclusion, to say that I have very much enjoyed the preparation of the paper, and I thank you very much for your reception of it.

JUNE 20, 1881.

PROFESSOR MACFARREN

IN THE CHAIR.

A CONCISE VIEW OF THE LAW OF COPYRIGHT AS AFFECTING COMPOSERS OF MUSIC.

By F. MEADOWS WHITE, Esq., Q.C.

THERE are many aspects in which the subject of copyright might be regarded by the writer of a paper appointed to be read before this Association. It might be treated historically, and dressed with amusing anecdote; instances of bad or good fortune attending on certain well-known compositions might be recorded; lessons might be drawn from the high rewards obtained by the comic song or the dance tune, as compared with the poor financial results realised by the classical work of high intention and, it may be, of high achievement. Or, again, each composer or publisher might well and effectively occupy the attention of a meeting of the Association for the limited period allotted for discussion in treating this subject of copyright from the standpoint of his own special grievance or experience or criticism, and in offering for acceptance his own peculiar remedy or suggestion for amendment of the law. Or, again (to give as illustrations two points in the law of copyright so special in their character that they will need no further notice in this paper), the reader might treat the subject from the side of paradox. *Eg. gr.:* it is a maxim in the law of copyright that there can be no copyright in immoral publications: can there be immorality in music? Could we apply this maxim and deny copyright to a musical composition so trivial, so commonplace, or with so many consecutive fifths in it as to amount to musical immorality? Or again, the fifth section in the Copyright Act of 1842* empowers the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, on complaint that the proprietor of the copyright in any book (including printed music), after the death of its author, has refused to republish or allow the republication

* 5 and 6 Vict., c. 45, sec. 5.

of the same, and that by reason of such refusal such book may be withheld from the public, to grant a license to the complainant to publish such book in such manner and subject to such conditions as they think fit; and the complainant may publish such book according to such license. *Question raised:* Would it be expedient to extend the principle of this provision to cases in the lifetime of the author, as, *e.g.*, when the proprietor of the copyright in a musical composition has got possession of the plates and locked them up in his cellars, and refuses to reprint; and the composer, who sees in the publication of the work the passport to the recognition of his genius, laments the loss to the world of such a precious possession?

But the title of this paper, which I preserve in the form printed in your original prospectus of sessional arrangements for the season 1880-81, shows at once that I do not intend (as, indeed, even if I conceived the intention, I should be unable) to pursue the subject into such interesting paths as those which I have indicated. I have, indeed, chosen the subject itself, simply because the profession of the lawyer touches here the interests of the musician; and I confess that my sole apology for appearing before you in response to an invitation made more than once by members of your Society is this, that I thought it possible that I might find in this subject something within my own province which I might hope usefully to present to you, so as not to lay myself open to the charge of presumption in appearing before you at all.

Time, however, will only permit a concise statement of certain *leading principles;* but my object will be, by putting together such a statement as accurately and intelligibly as I can, to enable members to have in their minds a clear apprehension of the subject, which may not only enable them to understand their own rights, but to consider from the musical composer's point of view where the law requires amendment, and to take their part in the discussion and movement which is now going on in that direction.

I first, however, wish to call attention to two things—(1) that I intend as far as possible to confine this statement to the law as affecting the *musician* in his capacity of *musical composer*, although I am happy and proud to recognise the fact that we have among our musicians men of mark in general literature as distinguished from musical composition, and who are thus interested in the widest consideration of this branch of the law; and (2) that I shall only depart from my scheme so far as to notice, as I go along, one or two of the chief propositions for the amendment of the law made by the Copyright Commissioners in their Report of 1878. It will be remembered that Sir Julius Benedict represented the musicians' interest in that Commission, and signed the report without qualification. And although these recommendations form at

present no part of the law as it stands, yet they are interesting and germane to our subject, as future legislation will be introduced, if at all, by Government probably on the lines of amendment as laid down by the majority of the Commissioners.

To proceed to our statement:—

First. The owner of a musical composition, be he the composer himself or his assignee, possesses in common with the author of any literary or art-work, secured to him by the common law, those rights which cannot be better defined than by the first* and second articles of the "Digest of the Law of Copyright," prepared by Mr. Justice Stephen as an appendix to the Report of the Copyright Commissioners.†

These articles are as follows:—

"(1) The author or owner of any literary composition or work of art has a right, so long as it remains unpublished, to prevent the publication of any copy of it by any other person."

"(2) The publication of any such thing as is mentioned in the last article for a special and limited purpose under any contract or upon any trust, express or implied, does not authorise the person to whom such thing is published to copy or reproduce it except to the extent and for the purposes for which it has been lent or intrusted to him."

Thus, in the words of the late Lord Chief Justice Erle,‡ "The nature of the right of an author in his works is analogous to the rights of ownership in other personal property . . . he may prevent publication; . . . he may lend or let or give or sell any portion of his composition, with or without liberty to transcribe; and if with liberty of transcribing he may fix the number of transcripts which he permits. If he prints for private circulation only, he still has the same rights, and all these rights he may pass to his assignee. About the rights of the author before publication at common law all are agreed."

This right is quite distinct from copyright, ordinarily so called, secured by statutory enactment, and is sustained by the general principles upon which the common law extends protection to all personal property; the common law (or, in other words, the judges whose duty it is authoritatively to state what the common law is) for this purpose recognising a right of property in literary compositions and manuscripts.

What is such a publication as would prevent the application of this rule to a musical composition is not very clear. The publication§ of an unpublished MS. play which had been presented on the stage and taken down in shorthand was restrained. And this view has been recently adopted by the

* P. lxv. † Dated May 24, 1878.

‡ "Jefferys v. Boosey," 4 *H. L. C.*, 815, at pp. 867-8.

§ "Macklin v. Richardson," *Ambler*, 694.

Supreme Court of New York,* by which Court—a plaintiff who was the assignee from the late Mr. Robertson of the acting right in one of his plays, which had not been printed, but had been performed at the Prince of Wales's Theatre in London—was held to be entitled to restrain the defendant, who had got the words by shorthand writers, from performing the version so obtained. Arguing from this analogy, I should form the opinion that (apart from questions arising under the Copyright Acts) the performance of a piece of music in public would not be such a publication as to deprive the composer of the common-law right to prevent subsequent publication in print or otherwise, not authorised by him.

But the statutes relating to copyright have by their operation reduced the discussion of this branch of the subject to very unimportant dimensions for any practical purpose.

Whether, after publication, the author or composer had at common law any right to restrain the multiplication of copies of his work by an unauthorised person was a question formerly much debated, and gave rise to a wide difference of opinion among the eminent judges who had to pronounce upon it,† but it is now clear law that since the Copyright Acts such a common-law right, if it ever existed, has been displaced by these Acts; and that the rights of the author and his assigns after publication depend entirely upon them. I proceed, therefore, shortly to summarise the principal provisions of the Copyright Acts now in force so far as they affect composers of music and their assigns.

The rights of composers of music and their assigns under these Acts are twofold.

I. *The Copyright proper.*

II. *The exclusive right of public performance.*

I. The copyright in a musical composition depends on the provisions of the Copyright Act, 1842 (5 and 6 Vict. c. 45) in which the word "book" by the interpretation clause‡ is made to include a "sheet of music." Musical compositions, however, had already been held to be "writings" by the great Lord Mansfield in a case§ in which John Christian Bach claimed copyright in one of his sonatas; which decision was followed in the cases of "Horace v. Longman"‖ and "Clementi v. Golding;"¶ and therefore it was held that musical compositions were entitled to the protection of the then existing Copyright Act.** In the latter case it was also decided that a song printed on a single sheet of paper was "a book": a point which, in the Act now in force, has been put beyond

* Reported. *Copinger on Copyright*, 2nd Ed., 1881, p. 296.

† "Millar v. Taylor," 4 *Burrow*, 2,303; "Donaldson v. Becket," ib., 2,408; "Jefferys v. Boosey," 4 *H. L.*, 815.

‡ Sec. 2. § "Bach v. Longman," 2 *Cowper*, 623.

‖ 2 *Camp.*, 27, note *a*. ¶ 2 *Camp.*, 32. ** 8 *An.*, *c.* 19.

question by the distinct enactment to which I have referred.

Musical compositions for the stage would also fall under the expression "dramatic piece," which by the same clause is made to include "musical or dramatic entertainment."

So also it has been held that pianoforte arrangements of opera scores ("Wood v. Boosey" *L. R.*, 2; *Q. B.*, 340; 3 *Q. B.*, 223; "Boosey v. Fairlie," 7 *Ch. Div.*, 301), new accompaniments and symphonies to old airs, or to airs in which there is no copyright (see "Leader v. Purday," 7 *C. B.*, 4; "Chappell v. Sheard," 2 *K. and J.*, 117), may be the subject of copyright. As an instance, I may mention the case of "The Low-backed Car." Samuel Lover composed these well-known words, and also a prelude and accompaniment, the air being old, and known as "The Jolly Ploughboy.* He brought his action for an infringement of his copyright, and succeeded.

Now, in all such compositions the copyright is the same as that in ordinary books. It is defined by the Act to be "the sole and exclusive liberty of printing or otherwise multiplying copies of any subject to which the said word is in the Act applied."†

The duration of the right is defined in the third section: "The copyright in every book which shall after the passing of the Act be published in the lifetime of the author shall endure for the natural life of the author, and for the further term of seven years commencing at the time of his death, and shall be the property of such author and his assigns; provided always, that if the said term of seven years shall expire before the end of forty-two years from the first publication of such book, the copyright shall in that case endure for such period of forty-two years; and that the copyright in every book which shall be published after the death of its author, shall endure for forty-two years from the first publication thereof, and shall be the property of the proprietor of the author's MS. from which such book shall be first published and his assigns." To put the first part of the section more shortly, the copyright term is forty-two years or for life and seven years, whichever shall be the longer term.

What is publication in the case of a book is not defined in the statute. It must be necessary, however, to decide this question, in every case in which it is desired to ascertain the duration of the right; for, according to the statute, the commencement of the term dates from publication. Now, first; it is *not* publication for the author to lithograph and distribute copies for the private use and possession of friends. This was the well-known case‡ of Her Majesty's and Prince

* "Lover v. Davidson," 1 *C. B.*, N.S., 182.

† 5 and 6 Vict., c. 45, sec. 2.

‡ "Prince Albert v. Strange," 2 *De Gex and Smale*, 652.

Albert's drawings, and this limited circulation among friends was in that case held to be a private circulation only, and not a publication. But a sale of MS. copies generally to the public has been held to be a publication. Mr. Copinger says at p. 112 of his excellent work* (to which I would refer all present who may desire to pursue the subject of this paper or any part of it into greater detail): "To constitute publication it is necessary that the work shall be exposed for sale or offered gratuitously to the general public, so that any person may have an opportunity of enjoying that for which copyright is intended to be secured." Mr. Justice Stephen says (note to *Digest*, Art. 5): "The word is obviously used in the sense of publishing in the way of trade, and not in the more general sense in which it is used, or such an expression as publishing a libel." This expression, however, "in the way of trade," is perhaps open to criticism, though it may give a sufficiently accurate definition for practical purposes. I would suggest that publication in the case of a book means "putting it forth for general public use." Such a "putting forth" may be done quite independently of any trade object by a person who is not a trader, and even gratuitously to serve what the putter forth might deem to be a philanthropic purpose.

But the nature and limit of the right can be better understood from what is described in the Act, or has been held by the Courts to be an infringement of it. What the Act says will be found in the fifteenth section: "Any one who in any part of the British dominions (defined by the second, the interpretation, clause to mean all parts of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Jersey and Guernsey, all parts of the East and West Indies, and all colonies, settlements and possessions of the Crown which at the passing of the Act had been or might thereafter be acquired) prints or causes to be printed any book in which there shall be subsisting copyright *without the consent in writing* of the proprietor, or shall import any book so unlawfully printed or imported, or knowing such book to have been so unlawfully printed or imported, shall sell, publish or expose for sale or hire, or shall have in his possession for sale or hire any such book so unlawfully printed or imported *without such consent* shall be liable to an action." Further, by a decision in reference to a musical composition, it has been held that the copyright in the music of an opera (Auber's "Lestocq") was invaded by the publication of a substantial part of one of the melodies therein contained, which had been arranged by Musard as a waltz. Lord Abinger, in the case referred to ("D'Almaine v. Boosey"),† said:

* "The Law of Copyright," by Walter Arthur Copinger. Second Edition. Stevens and Haynes. London, 1881.

† 1 *Y. and C.*, 288.

"I remember, in a case of copyright at Nisi Prius, a question arising as to how many bars were necessary for the constitution of a subject or phrase. Sir G. Smart, who was a witness in the cause, said that a mere bar did not constitute a phrase, though three or four bars might do so. Now, it appears to me that if you take from the composition of an author three or four bars consecutively, which form the entire air or melody, without any material alteration, it is a piracy, though, on the other hand, you might take them in a different order, or broken by the intersection of others, like words, in such a manner as should not be a piracy. It must depend on whether the air taken is substantially the same with the original. Now, the most unlettered in music can distinguish one song from another, and the mere adaptation of the air, by changing it to a dance, or transferring it from one instrument to another, does not, even to common apprehension, alter the original subject. The ear tells you it is the same. The original air requires the aid of genius for its construction; but a mere mechanic in music can make the adaptation of the accompaniment. Substantially the piracy is when the appropriated music, though adapted to a different purpose from that of the original, may still be recognised by the ear. The adding variations makes no difference in the principle."

And, lest you should be misled by the recurrence of the word printing, it matters not how the multiplication of the copies is produced, or whether or not that gain be the object. In the case of "Novello and Sudlow"* (printed Ludlow in the report) it was held that the gratuitous distribution solely amongst the members of a Philharmonic Society of lithographed copies of a copyright part-song (Sir J. Benedict's "The Wreath") was an infringement of the right of the owner of the copyright. And while I have already pointed out that there may be copyright in an arrangement, yet the arrangement may itself (and would, if unauthorised) be an infringement of copyright in the music arranged. In short, the unauthorised publication of a substantial part of the composition, in whatever form, would be an infringement of the copyright. What was such a substantial part would be a question of fact, to be determined by the judge or jury, according as the decision of the fact rested in the particular case with a judge or with the jury.

By the Judicature Act of 1873, however, it is henceforth made possible† to have a still better tribunal in such cases; for provision is made for enabling the Court "to call in the aid of one or more assessors specially qualified," and thus in a case in which technical musical matters were at issue, the

* "Sudlow," ex relatione Mr. Littleton at the meeting. 12 *C. B.*, 177.
† 36 and 37 Vict., c. 66, sec. 56.

Court might have the advantage of the assistance of professional musicians.

How these things are managed before a jury you may judge by the recorded facts in the case of "Leader v. Purday,"* in which the question arose whether the defendant had infringed the copyright, the property of Messrs. Leader and Cock, in certain accompaniments to a Russian air called "Pestal," in which air no copyright was claimed. The plaintiffs called Dr. Calcott and Mr. Masters, who swore that in their opinion the defendant's accompaniments were an infringement of the plaintiffs' copyright, assigning as one of their reasons that the same musical errors occurred in both. Both these witnesses admitted that the laws of harmony would require the composers of both to use pretty much the same notes. For the defendant, the bandmaster of the Woolwich band was called, who said that "Pestal" had been played for years by the band, and that in *his* opinion the accompaniments were different. The defendant also called one Grantham, who wrote the accompaniments complained of, and he swore that when he composed them he had never seen or heard the plaintiffs' accompaniments. The learned judge (Justice Creswell) left it to the jury to say whether they thought the resemblance between the two accompaniments was designed or was merely accidental, and such as would necessarily result from the observance of the laws of harmony. The jury found the resemblance was designed, and not accidental, and the plaintiffs had a verdict.

There appears to be this diversity between musical compositions and books ordinarily so called.

Many of the cases decided on the law of copyright as it relates to *books* have turned on the question as to whether a "fair use" was made of the books alleged to be pirated by the alleged pirate. A number of such instances is given by Mr. Justice Stephen in the *Digest* referred to; as, *e.g.*, "making and using extracts to a reasonable extent from a prior work on the same subject." Now, I don't know that any method has yet been discovered by which in music an equivalent has been found for "the inverted commas" of literature. We are all familiar with the introduction of certain well-worn chorales into musical compositions or in modern times with musical compositions based on national melodies; but in other cases extracts from prior works, even to the length of half a phrase, are called "reminiscences," or by a severer name. The fact is, that the quality of chief value in a musical composition is, in the judgment of many persons, originality of melodic subject.

I will conclude my observations on this important subject of

* 7 *C. B.*, 4.

infringement by the notice of a well-known legal maxim which has, in the kindred subject of infringement of the copyright in a dramatic composition, been recently applied in a case which went through all its stages to the House of Lords. Lord Coleridge, than whom no one on the bench or off it could be more competent to decide such a question, found that although two points in the composition had been taken from the plaintiff's play, they were comparatively unimportant; and therefore he held the plaintiff could not recover damages. And in so deciding he applied the maxim: "De minimis non curat lex": the law does not regard things too small to be regarded. So I venture to translate it. For the application of this maxim varies with the subject-matter; and in matter so precious as what I have heard called "Thematic material," who shall say in these days what is too small to be regarded?

We must now very briefly consider who can acquire or hold property in copyright. Any person who at the time of the first publication is either a natural born or a naturalised subject of the Queen, or who, although a foreigner, is at the time of publication temporarily (even on a visit for the very purpose) resident in the United Kingdom, or probably since 1842 in any part of the Queen's dominions,* can acquire the copyright in a work first published in the United Kingdom. Some opinions of very high value† go even to the extent that (since the passing of 5 and 6 Vict., c. 45), an alien friend, although not resident in the United Kingdom, can, by first publication therein acquire copyright. But this last proposition must be deemed as yet uncertain. Legal decisions ‡ under the earlier statute of Anne had denied copyright to the non-resident foreigner, but those who have expressed the opinions above referred to rely on the difference of language in the existing Act. It is clear, however, that no copyright can be acquired in a work already published out of the United Kingdom. The first publication must take place there, but there is § good authority for holding that a substantially cotemporaneous publication abroad will not deprive of his copyright the owner of the manuscript who would otherwise be entitled and who cotemporaneously publishes in the United Kingdom.‖ It is treated as an uncertain point whether previous publication within the dominions but out of the United Kingdom deprives the author of the right, but the balance of opinion is that such publication would be fatal. Publication must first take place in the United Kingdom (*Copinger*, 120; "Routledge v. Low," Opinions of Lords, *L. R.*, 3, *H. L.*, 100).

* *Copinger*, 120, 1.

† Justice Stephen in his *Digest;* Lords Westbury and Cairns, and Lord Chelmsford in "Routledge v. Low," *L. R.*, 3, *H. L.*, 114.

‡ "Jefferys v. Boosey," 4 *H. L.*, 815.

§ "Cocks v. Purday," 5 *C. B.*, 860, 884; Justice Stephen, *Digest*, Art. 7.

‖ *Digest* (Sup.), Art. 7.

Copyright is declared to be personal property and passes by will to executors, or (if there be no will) to the administrators of the owner of it.

Copyright may be assigned by entry in the Register at Stationers' Hall according to the thirteenth section of the Act to which I refer you. It * is also clear that copyright (apart from and besides this mode of assignment by entry) may be assigned, but that such assignment must *at least* be in writing; and a very learned judge (Chief Justice Tindal) on one occasion † suggested that a question might arise whether an agreement to be valid must not be under seal also. This is not regarded in the books as a settled question. On the contrary, authority seems to me to preponderate in favour of the proposition that a deed is *not* necessary. The writing need not be attested. I do not advise, therefore, the use of a seal, for a sealed document would require a deed stamp, which is a pecuniary consideration of substance.

Questions have been raised as to how far copyright in books is divisible. The Act (section 3) speaks of the interest *or any portion* of the interest of the proprietor of the copyright. It would seem that in cases where an author could secure copyright in two countries governed by different copyright laws, he might acquire and deal with such copyrights separately; for he has in that case clearly two distinct rights; but the proprietor of copyright under the statute cannot divide his statutory ‡ right and assign a right, *e.g.*, to publish in different parts of the United Kingdom: although he might perhaps assign the undivided right for a limited period or for a limited number of editions: or a share in the undivided copyright. I now refer to assignment strictly so-called, distinguishing it from mere "licenses": for, of course, the proprietor of a right is at liberty to license any person to do anything, to any extent, which without that license would be an infringement.

With regard to the remedies for infringement, there are one or two points to be observed. Not only, as in other cases of infringement of legal rights, may actions be brought for the infringement of copyright and injunctions obtained against any future repetition of the legal wrong, but by the special provision of the twenty-third section all copies of any work which shall be copyright and of which entry shall have been made on the register, which shall have been unlawfully printed or imported without the *written consent* of the registered proprietor of such copyright, may be recovered on demand or their value as damages may be recovered by the registered proprietor of the copyright, as well as damages for their detention.

This leads me to the observation that the non-registration

* "Leyland v. Stewart," 4 *Ch. D.*, 419.

† "De Pinna v. Polhill," 8 *C. and P.*, 78.

‡ *Copinger*, 168, &c.

does not affect the title to copyright in published and printed musical compositions. The *right* exists, unaffected by non-registration; but no proprietor of copyright can, before registration of his work as required by the statute, "maintain any action or any summary proceedings in respect of any infringement of such copyright" (sec. 24). The provision as to registration will be found in the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth sections, and in the schedules to the Act; but time only permits a mere reference to these sections upon this matter. I must also content myself with a bare reference to the duty (enforced by penalties for its non-fulfilment) as to the deposit of the copies in the British Museum and other libraries, which will be found in the sixth to the tenth sections inclusive.

II. Passing on to the second important right secured to the musical composer or his assigns by this statute, viz., the exclusive right to the public performance of their work. This right is governed by the twentieth, twenty-first, and twenty-second sections of the Act of 1842, and by the 3rd and 4th William IV., c. 15, which is incorporated by reference into the Act of 5 and 6 Vict., c. 45.

This mode of legislation by incorporation and reference, rather than by direct enactment, too common in recent times, has given rise to some uncertainty in the interpretation of the law upon this branch of the subject. I propose to state the effect of the legislation* as follows:

(*a*) The composer of an opera or dramatic musical piece, or of any musical composition, whether published as a book or not, and his assigns, has the sole and exclusive liberty of representing or performing it, or causing it to be represented or performed, for the term during which copyright is secured to the author of books—that is, as I have told you the life of the composer and seven years after death, or for forty-two years from publication, if that should be the longer term.

(*b*) Publication for this purpose means the publication of a composition as a book, according to the meaning of that term which I have endeavoured to explain, or its first public representation or performance, whichever should first happen.

(*c*) It is possible, but not certain, that so long as the composition remains unpublished as a book, the right is perpetual; but in this case it is open to grave doubt whether the perpetual right, if it exists, is not confined to performance in places of dramatic entertainment.

Upon two points, however, which are involved in this statement, Mr. Justice Stephen, in the *Digest* before referred to, expresses a different view of the law.

Firstly. He says that it follows, from the language of the Statutes, that where the dramatic piece or musical composition

* Sec. 20, 5 and 6 Vict., c. 45; 3 and 4 William IV., c. 15.

has been printed or published as a book before the first public representation thereof, the exclusive right of performance cannot be gained at all (*Digest*, art. 14).

Secondly. He also says (Art. 16), That* a dramatic piece or musical composition published as a book may (it seems probable) be publicly represented without the consent of the author or his assigns.

It will be seen that these two propositions differ very materially from my statement of the law.

In my opinion, it matters not whether or at what time the musical composition or the dramatic piece is published as a book—whether before or after representation in public—save for the purpose of determining the date from which the forty-two years are to run, and of converting the possible or probable perpetual right of the proprietor, whether author or assign, of the copyright in the unpublished MS. into the certain right for the forty-two years, or life and seven years. If it is published as a book, the author or assign has still the right of exclusive performance, but his right dates, if the publication as a book precede the first represention, from the date of publication; if it follow it, from the date of publication as a book.

Time will not permit me to give at length my reasons for disagreeing with so high an authority. I need not say with what diffidence I express this divergence of opinion; and you will be doing well, perhaps, to accept Mr. Justice Stephen's propositions as more likely to be accurate than mine. They cut down in a substantial degree the composer's rights.

There can be no doubt, however, of the following proposition thus stated by Mr. Justice Stephen: "If the dramatic piece or musical composition has been publicly represented or caused to be represented by the author or his assigns in any place out of Her Majesty's dominions before it was publicly represented there the exclusive liberty of performance cannot be gained unless under the International Copyright Act.†

Next, with regard to the assignment of the right of representation or performance—the right of exclusive liberty of performance (subject to one or two modifications, for which I refer you to the statute) may be assigned by entry at Stationers' Hall, just as copyright in a book may be assigned; but, by the twenty-second section of the Act of 1842, it is enacted that "No assignment of the copyright in a book consisting of or containing a dramatic piece or musical composition shall assign the exclusive liberty of performance, unless an entry shall be made in the register of such assignment, wherein the intention to do so be sufficiently expressed." Thus, in the

* Citing "Murray v. Elliston," 5 *B. and Ald.*, 657. N.B. This case was determined (1822) before the statute 3 and 4 Will. IV., c. 15, was passed.

† "Boucicault v. Delafield," 1 *Hem. and Mil.*, 597; "Same v. Chatterton," 5 *Ch. D.*, 267.

case* of the songs "Kathleen Mavourneen," and "Dermot Astore," the composer of which, Mr. Crouch, had assigned in 1843 to D'Almaine and Mackinlay all his "copyright," and amongst other general words "all his interest, property, and benefit therein"; and afterwards in 1878 assigned to J. F. Adams the sole liberty of performing or singing them, or causing, or permitting them to be performed or sung—it was determined that Adams got nothing by his assignment; for that Crouch, by the words "interest, property, and benefit," had expressed his intention that everything that he had in the music, *including the sole liberty of performance*, should pass; and, therefore, Hutchings and Romer, who had obtained by assignment D'Almaine's interest, succeeded in expunging from the register the entry of the alleged assignment to Adams. I may add, with reference to this case, that it was also determined in it that the Act of 1842 had a retrospective effect, the songs in question having been written before, although less than ten years before, its passing.

I may further illustrate the nature of this right of performance, as I did the nature of copyright in books, by an instance or two of what is an infringement of it. The right is defined to be "the sole liberty of representing or performing, or causing or permitting to be represented or performed." In the case of "Adams v. The Margate Pier Company," decided by Mr. Justice Lindley (reported in the *Times* of March 12, 1880), a band retained by the Company to play to visitors on the pier-head played a selection, arranged by the bandmaster, of airs from "Maritana"—among others "The Angelus," "The harp in the air," and "Alas! those chimes." At the trial Mr. Wall produced entries from Stationers' Hall of an assignment of the right to perform a pianoforte arrangement of "Maritana," and swore that he had examined the MS. of the bandmaster's arrangement, and that it corresponded as regarded both melody and harmony, note for note, with the deposited copy. It was contended for the defence that the defendants had done nothing in violation of the plaintiff's right. The bandmaster had the entire management of the music; they, the Company, did not interfere with it; neither he nor the members of the band were servants of the defendants. Mr. Justice Lindley, however, held that the Company, by permitting the bandmaster and his band to play what they pleased, impliedly permitted them to play these airs from "Maritana"; and, inasmuch as they retained sufficient control to prevent the performance of music of which they disapproved, they must be held to have permitted the performance of this particular music, and so to have infringed the plaintiff's rights.

* *Ex parte*, "Hutchings and Romer," 4 *Q. B. D.*, 488.

I may give yet another forcible illustration from a very singular case, a statement of which was submitted to a professional friend of mine of great experience for his opinion. At a musical entertainment in the country for some benevolent object, a programme of music was drawn up, and no one, so far as appeared, could have raised any objection to the performance of any single piece comprised in it. Unfortunately, one of the performers was gratified with an encore, and, without any communication with the managers of the entertainment, and in perfect innocence and ignorance that he was infringing anybody's rights, sang a song, accompanied by the young lady at the piano, I have no doubt with considerable applause. But, alas! possibly from the additional compliment of a notice in some local newspaper, what had been done became known. Actions were at once commenced against the singer, against the young lady, against the benevolent chairman. My friend was obliged to suggest a compromise. This gives a good illustration of an abuse of the Act which is noticed by the Commissioners (who had similar cases brought before them in evidence), and is discussed by them in their Report, pars. 167-172. Such a result could hardly have been anticipated by the Legislature when they by reference assimilated all musical compositions to dramatic pieces.

The prohibition against unauthorised performances—which may fairly enough be maintained in the case of the stage-play or an opera or certain musical compositions, where, as in the case of the stage-play, the author or composer can look only for pecuniary reward for his work to his right to be paid for the permission to perform it—seems to me, as one of the public, out of place and proportion in the case of the ordinary published and printed song or pianoforte piece, even if the song is a detached number from an opera or a cantata. The monopoly of a copyright in the printed music would in such cases appear—I speak as one of the public—to be a sufficient reward for the composer's invention.

Before concluding my observations on this second branch of the subject, I must say a word about the remedies which the law has given to the proprietor of the right of representation or performance for the infringement of the right.

There is a complication here which has led sometimes to misunderstanding.

The Act of 1842 has given to the proprietor of this right precisely the same remedies for the infringement of it as it has given to the proprietor of the copyright in books, the same right to damages and injunction, but subject to the same conditions, viz., that of previous registration.

But, further than this, it has extended to the author of every sort of musical composition the same remedies as the dramatic author possessed under the statute 3 Will. IV., c. 15. Now that

Act, which extended (as far as musical compositions were concerned) only to operas or musical dramatic pieces or entertainments, gave to proprietors of the liberty of representation the right to forty shilling penalties with which we are all so familiar. The exact words are as follows: "If any person shall represent, or cause to be represented, without the consent in writing of the author or other proprietor at any place of dramatic entertainment, any such production as aforesaid, or any part thereof, every such offender shall be liable for each and every such representation to the payment of an amount of not less than forty shillings, or to the full amount of the benefit and advantage arising from such representation or the injury and loss arising to the plaintiff therefrom, whichever shall be the greater damages . . . to the author or proprietor in any court." By the twentieth section of the Act of 1842 it is enacted that the benefit of the Act just cited shall extend to musical compositions.

Now it is to be observed that these penalties only attach to unauthorised representation in a *place of dramatic entertainment*. And although it has been held* that singing a single song of a dramatic character in a dramatic manner is a dramatic entertainment, and therefore that for the purpose of the Act the place where that may be done is for the time converted into a place of dramatic entertainment, yet something of this sort at least must be established to apply the penal clause. For example, in the case of the Margate Pier band which I cited to you; although the Judge held that the plaintiff was entitled by virtue of the Act of 1842 to recover such damages as he had sustained, yet he held that the plaintiff could not recover *penalties*, inasmuch as Margate pierhead was not a place of dramatic entertainment. This decision will have a material bearing on the cases of ordinary songs sung (say) at a village schoolroom; and I need not point out that the plaintiffs in these actions go rather for the forty shillings than for damages.

I may add that there is no necessity to prove previous registration in the case of proceeding for *penalties*. But it is necessary, as I have said, to prove previous registration in all cases where it is desired to found proceedings upon the Act of 1842.

I may add, further, that no proceedings can be taken, under either Act, after the lapse of twelve months from the alleged infringement.

I proceed now briefly to notice one or two salient amendments which the Commissioners recommend in their Report, and which affect the musical composer.

(1) To meet the inconvenience which arises from the cir-

* "Russell v. Smith," 12 *Q. B.*, 217.

cumstance that, as the law now stands, copyright in works published by the same author at different periods expires at different periods, the Commissioners propose that, instead of the present forty-two years from publication or seven years from the author's death, whichever is the longer, there shall be allowed in the case of works published in the author's lifetime the uniform term of thirty years from his death, and that in the case of works published after death a copyright of thirty years from the deposit in the British Museum shall be allowed to the proprietor of the copyright.

(2) They propose that copyright shall be extended to books first published, not only in the United Kingdom, but in any part of the British dominions, whether by a subject or by a foreigner; thus resolving the doubt above mentioned in favour of the non-resident foreigner.

(3) They propose to modify the law that no copyright can be gained in a work first published abroad by legislating to the effect that in the case of a natural born or naturalised subject, or domiciled alien, copyright shall be acquired by publication within three years from first publication abroad; but not after three years, unless under the provisions of International copyright. They do not propose to extend this privilege to the foreigner not domiciled in this country.

(4) With regard to the right of public performance, they propose to set all questions at rest, and to prevent the inconvenience which is supposed to arise from the difference of duration of term which may possibly exist in the respective cases of copyright as a book and the right of public performance, by a provision—that the author of any opera or musical dramatic piece or entertainment, or other musical composition, shall have (*a*) the sole liberty of representing or performing, or causing to be represented or performed; and (*b*) the sole liberty of publishing it as a book for the proposed new term of copyright, such term commencing at the first public representation or performance, or the publication as a book, whichever first may happen; and that if the first representation, performance, or publication takes place out of the Queen's dominions, such copyright may be obtained by a representation, performance, or publication within them three years after the said first representation, performance, or publication.

(5) They propose to abolish the law (if it be the law) which permits that a musical composition or dramatic piece, published as a book, may be represented or performed without the consent of the author or his assigns.

(6) They propose a more efficient scheme of registration by a State officer, and to enact that no owner of copyright shall be entitled to maintain any proceedings or to recover any penalty in respect of his copyright for anything done before registration.

Lastly. With respect to the recovery of penalties for the unauthorised performance of a dramatic piece or musical composition, they propose two important changes.

(1) They propose that no person shall be entitled to recover damages for such performance unless it is stated on the title-page that the right of public performance is reserved, and unless the name and address of the person authorised to permit performance is also stated thereon; and

(2) That the option to recover the forty shillings penalty or damages shall no longer be left to the plaintiff, but shall be determined by the Court.

Time will only permit reference to two other matters, one of which, however, is of such importance and complication that, if followed out with anything like completeness, it might well form the subject of a separate paper. I allude to the Law of International Copyright. I have already mentioned that neither at common law nor by the Copyright Acts is a work protected which was originally published in a foreign country, or, indeed, anywhere out of the United Kingdom. This was expressly decided by the Court of Queen's Bench,* in the matter of the publication here in 1882 by the defendant of a piece of Kalkbrenner's, which had been published in Paris in the year 1814. The plaintiff claimed damages for its publication by the defendant, but the Court clearly expressed the law to be that any one in such a case had the right to publish. And the law is the same, as far as I know (apart from international treaty right) in all other countries. To remedy this, the law (amended imperfectly in 1837) is now settled by the Act of 1844 (7 and 8 Vict., c. 12).

By the second section of that Act, which refers to books, including as in the Act of 1842, sheets of music (sec. 20), the Queen by order in council may direct, that the author of any book published in any foreign country to be named in the order, his executors, adminstrators and assigns, shall have copyright therein during such period as shall be defined in the order, not exceeding the home term of copyright in such works. By section 3, after such order, the Copyright Law, as defined and limited by the order shall apply to such works. By the fifth section, the Queen by order in council may direct, that the foreign author of dramatic or musical compositions which shall be thereafter first represented or performed in any foreign country to be named in the order, shall have the sole liberty of representing and performing the pieces or compositions during such period as shall be defined in the order, not exceeding the period during which authors in the United Kingdom have such right of performance; and the provisions of the Copyright Acts, subject to the limit of duration

* "Clementi v. Walker," 2 *B. and C.* 861.

defined in the order, are made applicable to such foreign works.

But by section 6 there is a very important enactment—that no author shall be entitled to the benefit of the Act or any order made under it unless *within a time named in the order* he registers certain particulars specified in the section and delivers a copy of the work as prescribed in the section. For details on this subject I must refer you to the section itself, but I call special attention to this matter, as a failure strictly to observe the statutory directions will deprive the foreign composer or his assignee of all benefits of the Acts.

Section 14 introduces the important proviso that no order shall be valid unless it states as the ground for issuing the same that due protection has been secured by the foreign power for the benefit of parties interested in works first published in the dominion of Her Majesty similar to those comprised in the order; and by section 19 it is provided that no author of any work published out of Her Majesty's dominions shall have by copyright a right to exclusive performance otherwise than he may become entitled to under the Act; and it has been held that this applies not only to foreigners, but to British subjects and to cases where there is no convention. Therefore it was determined that* a British subject (Mr. Boucicault) could not claim any performing right in this country in a play which had been first publicly performed in America; and, notwithstanding it was contended that before that Act the plaintiff as a British subject might have claimed the right under the general Acts, inasmuch as mere representation of a dramatic piece was not a publication of it, it was held that, however that might be, the enactment was express; and that an author representing a piece first abroad, could claim protection only under that Act (7 and 8 Vict., c. 12), and that he could not do *so* in the case under discussion, inasmuch as there was no convention with the United States.

By the sixteenth section it is enacted that nothing in the Act shall extend to translations of works the originals of which were protected. But by 15 & 16 Vict., c. 12 (1852), the law as to international copyright was amended and this enactment as to translations modified, and authors of foreign dramatic pieces were allowed for a limited time, not exceeding five years from such publication of an authorised translation, to prevent unauthorised translation; but by section 6 it was provided in these words (which I give verbatim, for they are rather peculiar and contain special mention of musical compositions): "Nothing herein contained shall be so construed as to prevent fair imitations or adaptations to the English stage of any dramatic piece or musical composition published in any

* "Boucicault v. Delafield," 33 *L. J.* (*Ch.*)

foreign country." There are, however, certain very special conditions as to registration, &c., imposed on authors desirous of availing themselves of the Act, for which time compels me to refer you to the section itself. I will only mention that the original work must be registered here within three months of its first publication; that the reservation of the right of translation must be notified on the title-page; that the authorised translation or a part of it must be published within a year from the registration of the original work; and in the case of dramatic pieces the authorised translation must be published within three months of registration of the original work.

The case of "Wood v. Chart," *L.R.* 10 *Eq.*, 193, decided by the late Lord Justice James when Vice-Chancellor, illustrates how strictly the conditions of the Act must be complied with.

The last point which I can touch upon is one of interest as between the composers of songs and publishers. The question has been raised as to whether there can be copyright in the title of a book. A very learned judge, just deceased, in a case in which a copyright was claimed in a title of a novel, "Splendid Misery," threw out a grave doubt as to whether copyright could be claimed at all to a mere title. It was not necessary to decide this question in the case, in which he and the Court decided against the plaintiff's claim on the ground that, at any rate, he could acquire no right to the particular title in question, which had been already used many years previously. There are titles which we know were invented long ago, under which old songs were presented, titles as old as the songs themselves. Such titles would be common property. But I cannot but think that this question will not be set at rest by the dictum of the learned judge; and I believe it is contrary to the general understanding of the profession. Perhaps the distinction may be this. The mere title can scarcely with strictness be said to fall under any of the phrases in the interpretation clause; but I do not myself see why, if the letterpress, say, of the song or dramatic piece is entitled to copyright, the title, if new, should not be considered as part (and very often a cleverly constructed part) of the work; and why therefore a piracy of such a part should not give a cause of action and judicial interference.

But this subject, considered as a branch of copyright, must be carefully distinguished from those numerous cases in which the courts have interfered on the ground of preventing fraud and imposition, where, with the object of misleading the public and diverting custom, and with the intention of fraudulently passing off a spurious article as the thing imitated, which had attracted popularity and was bringing profit, titles and title-pages have been imitated. Such were the cases of the version of the song "Minnie"* which engaged the attention of the Courts

"Chappell v. Sheard," 2 *K. and J.*, 117.

some years ago. These cases (although dealt with sometimes as cases of infringement of copyright) may well be supported on the ground of a well-known jurisdiction by virtue of which the Courts have interfered when in their judgment the public were likely to be deceived by the imitation of a well-known trade mark, whereby that which was spurious might be passed off for that which is genuine. The importance of the distinction is, however, considerable; for in the one case, if there is a copyright, the same words in whatever form could not be used, whereas in the other it may well be conceived that the title-page might be so framed or arranged that while the title remained the same the charge of fraudulent imitation likely to deceive could not fairly be maintained.

We may leave this matter, therefore, to future litigants.

In bringing this paper to a conclusion, I feel that I have scarcely fulfilled the promise of my title. There are many interesting points of the Law of Copyright which I have scarcely if at all touched upon;* and the omissions are so considerable as to disentitle this paper to the name of a "View of the Law of Copyright," concise or otherwise. I had better, perhaps, have entitled it "On some Points in the Law of Copyright as affecting Musical Composers"; or perhaps it would have been more useful before this Association (many of whose members are better acquainted by practical experience with the matter than I am myself) to have made the attempt to treat exhaustively one or two points only. Such as my paper is, however, I beg your acceptance of it as the best answer I could give to the invitation addressed to me.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN.—Ladies and gentlemen, I believe I may offer your thanks to Mr. Meadows White for his interesting paper, and for the very valuable information to many of us which he has afforded. I will now ask any one who has any remarks to make on any portion of the paper, or any explanation to ask, to favour us with his views. I am reminded to tell you that it is not necessary that the speakers at this meeting should be members of the Association.

Mr. LITTLETON.—I should like to ask one question. Is it necessary that the acting right should be separately and specially assigned on a separate paper, or would it be proper to include the acting right in the copyright assignment?

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—The law, as I understand it, is this—but I must beg that these fugitive opinions should not

* As, *e.g.*, "Assignments, Agreements between Composers and Publishers, Royalties, &c., Colonial Copyright, &c., &c."

be recorded against me—that you can assign the acting right in either of these ways you please. But if you assign music, as a book, then the Act says that unless the assignment of the book, the sheet of music, on the register clearly expresses the intention also to assign the performing right, that performing right would not pass. In the case with which I illustrated my paper it was held that the words which did appear in D'Almaine's assignment were sufficient. They had been clever enough to put what we lawyers call a number of general words in the assignment. Not only did they describe the piece of music, but they added the words, "all interest, benefit, or property," and the Courts had no difficulty in holding that those words were sufficient to pass the acting right as well as the copyright.

Mr. Littleton.—Suppose we merely take an assignment of the copyright for publishing purposes, and also insert in the same paper a clause giving us the acting right, and then suppose we do not enter at all, or wait until there is an infringement. I know we cannot get back damages, but there are numbers of publications so small that we do not care to pay five shillings, and really we are not only called upon to pay five shillings, but to pay another five shillings before we can get any receipt other than a small ticket, about half the size of my two fingers, which has merely got a number upon it. A foreigner can make his entry for the charge of one shilling only, but we have to pay five shillings. The fact is this law prevents people entering at all. There are a great number of things which are never entered. In our innocence we take the right of performing and the right of publishing in one document, and, as I say, in many instances we do not enter it at all.

Mr. Meadows White.—In such a case you could not bring any action for damages.

Mr. Littleton.—But do we lose the acting right?

Mr. Meadows White.—No.

Mr. Littleton.—We can protect, perhaps, both rights by merely giving up the damages accrued before we have made the entry.

Mr. Meadows White.—The Commissioners propose to make their system of registration perfect, and to make it cheap; they propose to make it compulsory.

Mr. Littleton.—I think it ought to be done without any charge, seeing that we are also fined to the extent of five copies.

Mr. Meadows White.—By the operation of the Copyright Act you are relieved from the stamp on the assignment. The assignment by entry does not require a stamp; whereas if you have an assignment by agreement in writing, you would have to pay, if you do not defraud the Revenue, sixpence for

a stamp on the agreement; and if Chief Justice Tindal's dictum is right—and he was a very great judge—you would have to pay, I think, 30s.

Mr. LITTLETON.—This new Act proposes to make us pay every time things change hands. For instance, the other day there was a sale at Messrs. Metzler and Chappell's, and nearly everything was purchased by Mr. Frank Chappell. Under this new Act, I think, he must rush at once to Stationers' Hall, and enter everything over again. That would be a tremendous trouble. If a publisher dies, I am not sure, even if his widow succeeds to the business, that she would not have to enter every single publication.

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—I do not think that is so.

Mr. LITTLETON.—It is in the new Act.

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—Those are very nice points to answer off-hand.

Mr. LITTLETON.—I do not ask for a legal opinion, but we were invited to speak.

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—I think these are very good points indeed to raise. But with regard to the case of the widow, I should think there was no entry necessary, because the Act of Parliament expressly provides that the copyright shall be personal property, and that it shall pass by will, or go to the administrators; and that seems to pass it in law without any formal assignment at all to the persons who are executors or administrators.

Mr. LITTLETON.—I will not detain you much longer, but I dare say you have seen catalogues of music sales which last six or seven days. They go to 2,000, 3,000, or 4,000 different pieces. Imagine the trouble of re-entering all these works.

Mr. JEFFERYS.—There is one thing recommended by the Commissioners, and that is that the right of public performance should be stated on the title-page. I want to know whether that would have to be put on the old things published prior to the Act.

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—I should think not.

Mr. JEFFERYS.—Then how are the public to discriminate? They do not know what is published under the present Act or under the old Act, and, therefore, if they buy a song published under the old Act, and they find that this is omitted about the reservation of the performing right, they may sing it in perfect ignorance, and render themselves liable to a penalty.

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE (after reading the clauses in the Commissioners' Report bearing on the point).—I should say on ordinary principles legislation would not be retrospective in the matter. I do not see how it could be carried out with the infinite number of copies of music now existing; you could scarcely call them in, and have a stamp upon them. I should think that would be primarily applicable to the future.

Mr. LITTLETON.—If it were not put on the title-page the public should have a right to use it.

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—It is obviously intended not to trap people with these actions. If they desire to sing a particular song they should know whom to go to, to make terms for the performing right.

Mr. C. STEPHENS.—It should be retrospective to be really efficacious.

Mr. PARRY.—These are all trade questions, but I understand Mr. White addressed this paper to composers. We are publishers who are interested in the matter, and we came to listen to the discussion. We have heard a great deal of discussion lately from the trade point of view, but I should like to hear as much as possible from the composers' point of view.

Mr. ASHDOWN.—I can only say that I think the composers' and the publishers' interests are identical. The publisher takes an assignment from the composer of all his interest. I do not know whether composers wish to introduce any new system of leasing works, but they are at liberty always to do so. There is perfect freedom of contract, but at present their interests are identical. Mr. Chappell and I have taken some trouble, representing the Music Publishers' Association, to see the Law Amendment Society on the matter of the proposed new Bill, which I presume you have not read.

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—I have not read it.

Mr. ASHDOWN.—They have not followed the recommendations of the Commissioners in a great many instances, but the Bill has been read a second time. I think we may concede that the interests of the composer and publisher are identical. We are acting in that way with our interviews with the Law Amendment Society; but if the composers have any idea of starting some new theory of the relation between themselves and publishers, I should like to know what it is. I presume there is nothing of that kind intended.

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—I should think not.

Mr. W. H. CUMMINGS.—There is one point which might be looked after in the interests of composers in future legislation. I was much surprised to hear in that case of "Wall v. The Pier Company of Margate" the decision given against Mr. Wall, on the ground that it was not a performance in a place of dramatic entertainment.

Mr MEADOWS WHITE.—The decision was in favour of Mr. Adams, who was Mr. Wallace's assignee, that there *was* an infringement of the right of performance; but it was also decided that there was no infringement of the previous Act of Parliament (the Act of William IV.) applicable to dramatic performances, which is incorporated, and applied to musical performances, but which only extends to performances in a place of dramatic entertainment. So Mr. Adams could not

recover the penalties, the right to penalties being given by the Act of William IV., which is incorporated in the Act of Victoria. Therefore, although he was held entitled to recover damages—that is to say, he had what is called a cause of action for the breach of his right of sole public performance—yet he was held not entitled to recover penalties because Margate Pier-head was not a place of dramatic entertainment.

Mr. W. H. Cummings.—It might be an advantage if the whole right were protected, and for this reason—I can conceive it quite possible that a composer of a good work, say the "Elijah," might be injured. It is not likely to occur, but suppose the gentlemen who live in Hatton Garden were to take the airs out of "Elijah" and set them on barrel organs, that would be anything but a good thing for the work. Suppose we had such a work composed in these days, the composer or publisher or proprietors of the copyright ought to have the power of preventing the performance of that work in any place—Fleet Street, Hanover Square, or anywhere else. I think it would be very much to the advantage of the composer if that could be secured.

Mr. Meadows White.—They have it now, it is only a question of the remedy.

Mr. W. H. Cummings.—Then I did not quite understand the question of penalties by this gentleman of the name of Wall who has made himself notorious. There is a certain old song, for instance, "She wore a wreath of roses," which had been sung for a great number of years publicly in all kinds of concert-rooms, and no one ever dreamt of stopping the singing of it; it was sung by Phillips, Rudersdorff, and many singers of the time gone by, and then all of a sudden, not the publisher, but Mr. Wall, secures the reversion of the words, I suppose, and registers that reversion, and immediately comes down on singers singing his song who have been singing it all their lifetime, and compels them to pay forty shillings. Has he any right to do that, seeing that for thirty years that song had been sung without any objection, and that no such right was claimed by the original proprietors?

Mr. Meadows White.—It depends on whether the right to exclusive public performance exists. If the song were so old that the term of protection had expired or never existed, of course there could be no such acting right existing. In the case of "The Low-backed Car," however, that was a case in which the right of performance would have been protected, because that song was published subsequently to the date of the Acts which gave protection. I do not see why, if the exclusive right ought to exist, authors should lose it by having been kind enough to let people use their work for a certain number of years. But with regard to it being a trap to the singer, of course there is something like a trap in it when it

has been sung so much that presumably any one might sing it. That is the reason, I suppose, why the Commissioners suggested there should be some notification on the title-page that the right of performance is reserved, and the name of the person to whom application should be made for permission to perform it.

Mr. Ashdown.—The trouble has arisen from the carelessness of both composer and publisher. The publisher, in taking assignments many years ago, conceived he got every right the composer had, and omitted to distinguish them in the assignment. As to most of the existing composers, when the omission was found out, Mr. Wall could not deal with them, because they are too honourable; they know the publisher would not have bought the work unless he had the acting right, because he counts on that for making his profit. It is the publicity given to the thing that enhances its value. In fact, taking the acting right away in some cases would take away nine-tenths of the value. The publisher and composer were dealing together believing that the composer was assigning to the publisher the acting right and everything he possessed, but they did not read aright the Act of 1842. Then this man finds out the descendant of the composer—for instance, Wallace—Wallace would not have sold these acting rights to him—he finds out the descendant of Wallace, who is in an impecunious condition, I presume, and he parts with the whole of his rights for some £40 or £50, and causes this mischief. It seems to me it is something like a right of way; if the public have enjoyed for thirty or forty years a right of way, I do not think the proprietor then could proceed against you for trespass; and I think there might be some provision made in that way, because it is a trap. Such a thing would not be allowed as regards land, and the public has a right of way analagous to it; the man has slumbered on his rights, and has given them to the public.

Mr. Meadows White.—This is an important matter. It is very difficult to follow a paper of this sort without having it before you, but I have stated in the paper that this law was enacted in 1842, because it had previously to that statute been held, what I must confess I thought was the natural result of it and the common sense of it, that when the copyright of a song was sold to a publisher, that would pass both the right of publication and that of performance. The judges held, in a case just before the Act of 1842, that the ordinary assignment of a song or piece of music did pass the right of performance, and I should have thought that was the natural interpretation of an ordinary assignment. But I suppose there was some disturbance made at the time by some one supposed to represent the interests of composers, and that provision was inserted in the statute. It depends entirely on the statute.

As I pointed out in the case I mentioned, Hutchings and Romer succeeded in expunging the entry on the register, on the ground that those words "all interest, benefit, and property" were held to have fulfilled the statutory enactment, namely, that a clear statement must appear of the intention to pass the acting right.

Mr. ASHDOWN.—Those words conveyed a contingent right?

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—They were held to convey every right he had in the song, among those rights being the right of performance. It was held in that case, as I pointed out—and it is an interesting case to musicians—that the Act was retrospective.

Mr. ASHDOWN.—It was only the accident of those words being in the assignment.

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—If it had not been for those words contained in D'Almaine's assignment, it would have been different.

Mr. STEPHENS.—As the law is now about to be altered it behoves us to be on the watch that the alterations should be made efficacious and just. It appears to me if the statement on the title-page that such and such a work is protected against performance is to be necessary for the recovery of penalties, if that is not to be retrospective, it will leave the thing in a most incomplete state. The very song which has been spoken of, "She wore a wreath of roses," which has been sung for so many years, would still not be marked on the title-page, and in that case and many similar cases persons would be entrapped into paying this penalty after having proceeded in good faith.

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—They would not be entrapped if the law was that no damages should be recovered unless upon the title-page of the song sung there appeared this notice. Then of course that would not be prospective legislation, but would affect music already printed.

Mr. STEPHENS.—I thought you stated your opinion that it would not affect music already published.

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—That depends entirely on the words of the proposed Act of Parliament.

Mr. STEPHENS.—I only point out how serious it would be; that the object to be attained would not be half attained; that a great bulk of the music which is very popular is already published, and probably, however much is yet to be published, it will never approach in quantity to that which is so popular in the concert-room. Unless this provision which is to be stated on the title-page applies to works already published, it would be practically inoperative.

Mr. ASHDOWN.—It is almost impossible to get that. The property is in the hands of two antagonistic parties. As to the right of representation of "She wore a wreath of roses,"

the publisher would not give any information about it. He does not want to stop the sale of the song. The owner of the copyright would not put such a notice on the song and stop the sale of it.

Mr. STEPHENS.—The law should provide it must be done.

Mr. LITTLETON.—If it were not on the title-page there should be no penalty.

Mr. STEPHENS.—That covers the retrospective view entirely.

Mr. ASHDOWN.—Then Mr. Wall will have to pay the publishers to put it on, or there will be no penalty.

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—I regret very much that I did not carry out an intention which I had fully in my mind to obtain a copy of the Law Amendment Society's bill, which I had heard something about, but I did not know it had made such progress as is said to be the case. Of course this paper would be very imperfect unless some notice were taken of it, and if this paper is to be published amongst the records of the Society, I can take it back, and in a note I can mention this proposed Act of Parliament.

Major CRAWFORD.—There are some cases in which the property of the words is in one party and the property of the music in another. In that case would it be necessary for a person who wanted to sing a song at a concert to apply for permission to two different parties?

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—Oh, no.

Major CRAWFORD.—Because that would pretty well knock up miscellaneous concerts.

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—They would only apply to the person who had the right to prohibit the performance.

Major CRAWFORD.—Would those rights be consolidated? Would there be in all cases only one person who would have the right to prohibit the performance?

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—I do not see how there can be more than one person.

Mr. W. H. CUMMINGS.—In one case which has been mentioned the only right is in the words, not in the music.

Major CRAWFORD.—It would come under the class of "Lieder ohne Worte."

Mr. CUMMINGS.—There is one point which has not been touched upon, which, in the interest of composers, I should like to mention—that is, there are publishers who do sometimes things which are not quite straightforward. This case does not apply to me, but to a friend of mine. There was a sale of Ewer and Co.'s, in Oxford Street, and a song was sold which certainly in my judgment (it was written by a friend of mine) would have been popular. It had popular words and a popular tune, and it was by a popular man; but a publisher bought this song, seeing the words were very good, and he himself employed a member of his family to set them to very

indifferent music, and thus "burked" my friend's song; he melted the plates, and it has disappeared entirely. I mention that as a gross injustice to the composer, and I think that is a case which should be provided for—that there should be no such chance given to any publisher to destroy the brain-work of any man. Another case I would put is this: I do not think the music of a composer should be distorted at the caprice of a publisher or an arranger. I think if a man wrote the "Stabat Mater," and left it so, we have no right to turn that into a set of valses. I do not think we have a right to turn Mendelssohn's songs without words into valses, as I have heard recently at a theatre; and I think after a composer is dead, his representatives, if it is for 500 years, ought to have the same right to put a stop to such a thing as that. I consider that is an abuse of a work of genius.

Mr. Parry.—There is now a good opportunity for composers to make any of these suggestions.

Mr. Meadows White.—It is rather a curious thing that, as a kind of joke, I put forward in my introductory remarks that the subject might be treated in that way. You remember I called attention to an existing provision in the Copyright Act, by which after an author's death his representatives may make an application, if the proprietor of the copyright of the author's work refused to reprint, to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and they might grant a licence to the composer's representatives to publish the work on any conditions which they might assign. I suggested that that might be applied to the case of the living author; that if a publisher melted up the plates or refused to print the work which the composer relied upon for his reputation, he should have an opportunity of going to some tribunal and saying, "This is my work, I composed it, the publisher has got it, or the proprietor of the copyright has got it, and for some reason of his own will not publish it. He says it will not answer his purpose and that it will be a loss of money. I want a tribunal before whom I may go, and who may say, 'You may buy it back from the publisher at the price he gave for it and his expenses, and then revest the copyright in the author.'" I do not mean to say that this is a practical suggestion, but it has occurred to me sometimes, as one of the public, that something of hardship may happen to a composer who has parted with the copyright in his work when those to whom he has sold it refuse to print it.

Mr. Littleton.—With regard to works being suppressed by publishers, I do not think that very often happens if there is anything like a demand at all for them; but we have melted the plates of one or two things, and after a long series of years the author has turned up and wished to have it reprinted or to be allowed to do it himself. There have not

been many instances I must say, but I remember one of a masonic song in Liverpool, I think. They wanted to reprint it, and I said, by all means do so. It would be monstrous folly and dishonesty if you do not want to do a thing to wish to prevent any body else doing it. I have had perhaps three or four cases occur.

Mr. STEPHENS.—Was this a copyright of your own?

Mr. LITTLETON.—It was one Mr. Novello had purchased, and it belonged to me. I did not sell it to them. Why should I take money for what I did not want? I could not demand any payment for a thing I had voluntarily abandoned.

Mr. ASHDOWN.—We have melted some 500 or 600 works simply because they did not sell; but if the composers applied to us they would have perfect liberty to re-engrave them.

Mr. PARRY.—I do not think you want much Act of Parliament for these things.

The CHAIRMAN.—I think, gentlemen, we cannot close this meeting more happily than upon the account of Mr. Littleton's generosity, which will give us an actual impression of the good feeling publishers have towards those who have business transactions in their hands. I believe that our friends the publishers who have favoured us with their presence and opinions to-day may be relied upon for equity where law does not prevail, and we may be assured that they will do whatever is just in doing what is generous. On the subject of copyright it will be of great value to have this paper of Mr. Meadows White in print in the records of the Society, and especially with the addendum which he offers to insert, bringing the matter down to the very last moment of publication. It will be a great deal more easy to refer to such a lucid account as he has given than to Acts of Parliament, and it will be doubtless of great service as a guide to all of us. We are greatly indebted to him for having placed the subject so clearly before us; and one may say, as Mr. Meadows White warned some here present before it began that it was a very dry subject, he has moistened it with admirable skill.

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—I am exceedingly obliged to you. The paper appears to be very elementary, and as there are books which may be consulted upon the subject, I do not know that it would be worth publication; but I think I will take it back and notice the Law Amendment Society's Copyright Bill, because I do not think it will become law this Session; and, therefore, it will be useful, perhaps, just to notice its provisions, in order that next year when it comes before the public those who take an interest in the subject may make suggestions.

The CHAIRMAN.—Is it still possible to make suggestions to the persons who have framed the Act?

Mr. MEADOWS WHITE.—Oh, I should think so. I should think they would be very glad of it.

APPENDIX.

THE following observations are added by way of appendix, in accordance with my promise given at the reading of the above paper, to show, first, the principal alterations in the law as proposed by the bill promoted by the Law Amendment Society, which has been introduced into Parliament, but dropped for this Session; secondly, in what that bill differs in salient points from the proposals of the Copyright Commissioners as noticed in my paper; thirdly, one or two alterations in the bill itself, which have been suggested by the Music Publishers' Association. I am indebted for a copy of the bill, and for information as to the proposals of the Music Publishers' Association, to Mr. Basil Field, who is concerned for the promoters of the bill.

The bill repeals existing Acts, and aims at a codification of the law, but proposes certain considerable amendments in it.

Firstly, as to the alteration of *the term*. The Commissioners proposed, as I stated, that in the case of works published during the author's lifetime the term should be uniform, viz., thirty years from the death: in the case of posthumous works, thirty years from the deposit of the work in the British Museum. The bill proposes fifty years from registration; the publishers suggest fifty years from registration, or life and thirty years after death, whichever shall be the longer term. The same term is proposed for the performing right as for the copyright. It will be observed that the bill does not meet the objection which influenced the Commissioners, viz., that the present mode of calculation of the term from the publication of each work caused a diversity in the period of determination of copyright in the various works of the same author. The same diversity will exist if the term should date from registration. The proposal that the term should commence from registration, would seem to make it necessary that registration should be compulsory. Accordingly a system of registration both of publishing and performing rights is proposed, compulsory on all who desire to have copyright in their works. For it is proposed to be enacted that persons otherwise entitled, shall become entitled to copyright or acting right only after registration, when registration is required. The language of the bill is, however, obscure on this point, so far as registration in the first instance by the author himself is concerned. It is clear, however, that the framers of the bill intend that assignees from the author shall have no copyright unless they register; the proposed enactment being very plain that no assignment (other than assignments by operation of law, as, *e.g.*, to executors or administrators) shall take effect except by means of the register. The music publishers, however, pro-

pose to modify this, and leave the mode of assignment optional, except that it shall be in writing under hand. But this proposed amendment seems out of harmony with the principle of the bill, which rests on registration.

Unless registration is intended to be compulsory, it is by no means clear what would be the status between publication and registration, from which it is proposed that the term of copyright should run. Is it intended that copyright should exist in the author between publication and registration. If so, he can prolong the term, if, keeping the copyright in his own hands, he fails to register; for the term of fifty years runs only from registration.

It would appear to be contemplated that each separate work should be registered. A modification might be suggested, to meet certain objections raised in the discussion upon the paper, viz., that any number of works assigned by the same assignor to the same assignee at the same time might be included in one entry or certificate; but in view of the cheapness of the fee, it is difficult to appreciate the force of the objection.

Secondly, it is proposed that after publication (which is defined in the bill to be, in the case of books, the first act of offering for sale, or advertising or exposing for sale to the public any copy of a work, or sending it to be registered; in case of a musical composition, either any such act of publication, as of a book, or first public performance—that is, according to another definition, performance in any place to which admission is obtained by payment or subscription), or, in cases where registration is required after registration, the composer of any musical composition—that is, according to the bill, "the composer of any original melody and, in the case of a new adaptation, setting, or arrangement of an old melody for a different class of composition, whether for the voice or voices, or for any instrument or combination of instruments, or combination of voices and instruments (the melody in such cases being used by the adapter with the consent of the composer thereof)"—shall be entitled to copyright and performing right throughout *the British dominions*, provided the compositions shall have first been published or publicly performed within *the British dominions*. This is an extension recommended by the Commissioners. Formerly the copyright was limited to works first published in the United Kingdom.

Thirdly, as the Commissioners recommend, copyright is by the bill given to an alien friend first publishing in the Queen's dominions.

Fourthly, the bill proposes that British subjects who first publish out of the British dominions shall nevertheless be entitled to copyright if they republish within the British dominions within three years from the first publication out

of the British dominions. This is substantially in accordance with the Commissioners' recommendations.

Fifthly, the bill maintains the provisions of the twenty-second section of the existing Act, viz., that the assignment of a musical composition shall not carry the right of performance unless by express words; but the music publishers propose to adopt in effect the recommendation of the Commissioners that any public performance of separate musical compositions not forming or being part of any opera, oratorio, drama, cantata, or operatic work, shall be deemed to be with the consent of the owner of the performing right in music and words, unless there shall appear on the title-page of the published copies of such composition a statement that the performing right is reserved. The Commissioners, it will be remembered, go further, and suggest that the name and address of the person who can permit performance should also appear on the title-page. The words proposed by the publishers, "shall be deemed to be with consent," are not so clear as those proposed by the Commissioners, viz., "No person shall recover damages unless it appear on the title-page," &c. Neither proposition meets the objection raised at the discussion, which was founded upon the difficulty of providing for the case of music already published and issued. The bill itself, however, as I have said, maintains the law on this point and makes no alteration in it. But even if the words proposed by the music publishers be introduced, they will not affect existing compositions in which there shall be subsisting copyright; for another clause of the bill maintains the existing law in all cases where copyright may exist at the time of the passing of the bill.

Sixthly, with regard to penalties. The promoters of the bill have not in this respect followed the suggestions of the Commissioners to which I referred. In fact, they make the penal clauses more severe, it being proposed that the owner of the performing right shall be entitled to recover no less than £5 penalty for each performance, or damages—being the full benefit and advantage of the performance without deducting expenses—whichever shall be the greater damages. The music publishers dissent from this provision, and, indeed, it appears to be one which needs careful watching on the part of those who object to the present system.

Lastly, it may be useful, with a view to the consideration of the subject before the bill shall be again brought forward in Parliament, shortly to state what the bill proposes as a definition of acts of infringement in the case of musical compositions. After enumerating certain acts very much in the language of the fifteenth section of the Act of 1842, cited in the paper, applicable to the infringement of copyright of musical compositions considered as books, the clause describes certain other acts, which, if done without the consent of

the owner of the copyright in the musical composition are to be deemed infringements of it—that is to say, "making and publishing or offering for sale any new adaptation or arrangement of an original melody in which there is subsisting copyright either for voice or instruments or both; or exporting or importing for sale any such arrangements and adaptations, or knowing such works have been so imported, sells them." The clause then provides that the "performing right" shall be infringed by "publicly performing (*i.e.*, performing in a place to which admittance is obtained by payment or subscription) or permitting or causing public performance of any musical composition in which any other person has performing right, or publicly performing or permitting or causing public performance of any unlawful copy or colourable imitation, adaptation, or arrangement of such composition or of the melody thereof." It will be seen that the bill does not meet but rather ignores the objections which have been urged to the present state of the law as to performing right.

The bill proposes, as I have said, to repeal the existing Acts, but this is subject to the exception that all existing copyrights are to be governed by those Acts, which, for this purpose are to remain in full force. The music publishers propose that a clause should be added to the bill by which (subject to a certain proviso in favour of the composer) the term of copyright subsisting at the passing of the bill shall be extended to the term proposed to be granted by the bill.

It may be noticed that the limitation of the effect of the bill to future publications would also have the effect of limiting to compositions in which copyright might be obtained after the passing of the bill the clause proposed by the music publishers, whereby it would be enacted that the reservation of the right of performance should appear on the title-page.

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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

MUSICAL ASSOCIATION

FOR THE INVESTIGATION AND

DISCUSSION OF SUBJECTS CONNECTED WITH THE

ART AND SCIENCE OF MUSIC.

FOUNDED MAY 29, 1874.

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

"On the Arrangement of the Stops, Pedals, and Swell in the Organ." By R. H. M. Bosanquet, Esq., M.A. . . . 1

"On the Beats of Mistuned Harmonic Consonances." By R. H. M. Bosanquet, Esq., M.A. 13

"The Cultivation of Church Music." By W. H. Monk, Esq., Mus. Doc. Dunelm 29

"Songs and Song-Writers." By Eustace J. Brakespeare, Esq. 59

"On Some Italian and Spanish Treatises on Music of the Seventeenth Century." By the Rev. Sir F. A. Gore Ouseley, Bart., M.A., Mus. Doc., President of the Association 83

"Consecutive Fifths." By F. E. Gladstone, Esq., Mus. Doc. Cantab. 99

"Sir William Sterndale Bennett: a Brief Review of his Life and Works." By Arthur O'Leary, Esq. 123

"Some Remarks on Richard Wagner's Music Drama 'Tristan und Isolde.'" By H. F. Frost, Esq. 147

"From Rhythmic Pulsation to Classical Outline." By Henry Hiles, Esq., Mus. Doc. 169

"On Various Attempts that have been made to Record Extemporaneous Playing." By T. L. Southgate, Esq. . 189

The Authors of the respective Papers are alone responsible for the opinions expressed in them, as well as for the correctness of the illustrations.

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NOVEMBER 7, 1881.

G. A. MACFARREN, ESQ., M.A., MUS. DOC.,

VICE-PRESIDENT, IN THE CHAIR.

ON THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE STOPS, PEDALS, AND SWELL IN THE ORGAN.

By R. H. M. BOSANQUET, Esq., M.A.

MY attention was recently drawn to this subject in designing a small organ of three manuals, which has been built for me by Messrs. Gray and Davison. After the organ was so far completed that the design could not be altered, my attention was drawn to certain Resolutions and Recommendations put forward by the College of Organists. These have the most desirable object of securing uniformity in the arrangements under consideration. They differ in many essential points from the arrangements I have adopted, and, considering the great authority with which they come to us, I have, with some diffidence, desired to secure a little further discussion of some of the points at issue, that we may consider whether the Resolutions and Recommendations in question may not be susceptible of some amendment.

Uniformity in these matters is doubtless most desirable, but it seems to me questionable whether it may not be dearly bought at the sacrifice of points of principle. If I can show that the arrangements advocated are in any respect opposed to principles of convenience, I think I shall have made out a case for further consideration of the subject.

The first topic is the arrangement of the stops of the different departments of the instrument. The Resolutions in question place the stops of the great, choir, and solo organs on the right hand of the performer; those of the swell, pedal, and the couplers on the left, according to the scheme:—

Swell.	Solo.
Pedal.	Great.
Couplers.	Choir.

Now there are principles involved in any arrangement of this

description which are clearly stated in Hopkins's book on the organ, and will, I think, be admitted without question by most players (Hopkins, 2nd edition, 1870, p. 283):—

(1) As a rule the left hand can be more easily spared for a moment than the right.

(2) The great organ stops are more frequently brought under the control of the feet of the performer by composition pedals than those of any other department.

Inference: that the great organ stops should be placed on the right, in which I quite agree.

But the writer proceeds: "The swell and choir organ stops are not nearly so often acted upon by composition pedals."* Here we must observe that it is now scarcely correct to associate the swell and choir together in this respect. In organs even of moderate size the swell is almost always acted on by composition pedals, while their application to the choir does not take place, at least in ordinary instruments. I therefore agree with Hopkins, in opposition to the Resolutions of the College of Organists, that the choir stops should be on the left. But it appears to me that on the principles just enunciated the swell stops should be on the right, at least in cases where they are adequately controlled by composition pedals. This point was brought to my notice by the arrangement of the stops in the organ at Magdalen College, Oxford. As I shall have to refer to this instance again, I may as well shortly indicate the general distribution:—

Positions of Stops in Organ at Magdalen College, Oxford.

Choir (in 1 column).	Couplers (in 1 column).	Solo (2 stops). Great (in 1 column).	Swell (in 1 column).
Pedal (4 stops).			

For a good many years I have frequently had the opportunity of watching the service-playing on this organ; and there can, in my opinion, be no doubt as to the convenience in this case of having the swell stops on the right, even though the compositions are not as complete as they would probably be in a new organ. If the swell and great organ stops are both on the right, it becomes unnecessary, so far as the numerical balance of stops is concerned, to place any others on that side; and I think that it is a decided inconvenience in the organ above mentioned that the two solo stops are on the right side. In shifting them while playing, I notice that the player nearly always puts the left hand over. Hopkins expresses no opinion on this point;

* This passage continues: "Moreover, as the numerous delicate shades and varieties of tone are produced from those departments chiefly—leaving the great organ for broad contrasts—the left side appears the most proper one whereon to place their draw-stops."

but the principles above mentioned decidedly lead to placing the solo stops on the left.

As to the pedal stops and couplers, there can be no doubt that the "Resolutions" are right in assigning them positions on the left.

To resume, therefore: I would ask if it is not worth further discussion whether it is not better to put the swell stops on the right, and the solo and choir on the left—in these respects varying the scheme of the College of Organists. Of course these principles can hardly be applied to organs with two manuals: in these cases the balance of the number of stops will generally require the swell stops to be on the left.

I think, however, there is much to be said in favour of a general recommendation that a third manual should be adopted, even in small instruments, in preference to having a large number of stops with two manuals only; and, in any case, the arrangements of a two-manual instrument can hardly be so complicated as to cause inconvenience to a player by divergence from the type to which he is accustomed. In the small organ recently constructed from my design, the swell stops were placed on the right, as in the organ at Magdalen College; the choir, couplers, and pedal on the left; and, as far as I am competent to judge, the arrangement was most convenient.

The next point I wish to mention is the arrangement of the stops of each department. The principle to which I attach importance here is that the stops of each department should, as far as possible, be arranged in a single column—not in masses, in the modern fashion. The stops of the great, swell, and choir organs at Magdalen are arranged in this way, and of course it was common in old organs. The single column is the form in which specifications are always drawn. Consider how easily and rapidly the eye runs over the specification in this form, and how long it often takes to make out and remember the composition of a mass of stops of the modern type. In the largest organs I believe double columns would be sufficient, and these are not so very much less clear than single columns.

The next point is as to the pedals. I entirely agree with the "Resolutions" that the pedals ought to be parallel. I have never been able to understand how legitimate passage-playing could be carried out on a radiating pedal-board, which is so narrow in scale towards the back that it is hardly possible to put down the pedals singly in that region. As to the concavity recommended, I do not myself think it of much importance. On the whole, I rather prefer the pedals flat; but I had my recently built organ provided with a pedal-board of slight concavity, and it is not inconvenient. As to this point of concavity, I should mention that some uncertainty has arisen, owing to the description of the curvature as that of

an arc of a circle having a radius of eight feet six inches. Organ-builders, though intelligent and practical, do not all know what a radius means; and, a short time ago, I was introduced by an excellent country builder to a most astonishing-looking pedal-board, in process of construction, as the new pedal-board of the College of Organists. The *diameter* had been taken as eight feet six inches, instead of the radius, so that the pedal-board was curled up at the ends in a most curious way.

The remaining point in connection with the pedals arises on the resolution that the front of the short keys form an arc of a circle having a radius of eight feet six inches. I have had some experience of pedal-boards made like this, or nearly so; I think them most inconvenient, and this feeling is shared by others. Quite recently, without any mention of the subject on my part, the organist at our college chapel had a pedal-board of this description altered back so as to have the fronts of the sharps in a straight line, on the ground that he disliked the new arrangement. I have tried to analyse the reason, and, as far as I can make out, it is that by the curved front of the sharps the available portion of the ends of the pedal-board is brought too far forward under the seat, so that there is the same difficulty in getting at the ends as if the whole pedal-board were too far under the seat. That is my suggestion.

As to the swell. The first Recommendation of the College of Organists is, "that the consideration of organ-builders be directed to the widely expressed desire for some means of operating on the swell in addition to the ordinary swell pedal." Quite independently of this recommendation I designed the new swell action from the back of the seat which was applied in the organ recently built for me. It is particularly in connection with this new action that I regret that so few of the members of the Association responded to my invitation to see the instrument. Our excellent secretary, whom I must take this opportunity of thanking for his kind assistance, was however there. There is a movable back to the seat, to which a breast-strap is attached. By leaning forward lightly against the breast-strap the swell is opened. It was demonstrated, on the occasion in question, that it was possible to play such a piece as the first movement of the First Sonata of Bach, or the opening of the Passacaglia, with employment of the swell throughout, while both feet were engaged with the pedals as they ought to be. At the same time my impression is that the employment for which it will be felt as the greatest relief is the use of the swell during accompaniment. There are two classes of players in this respect at present. The one do not attempt to use the swell while the pedals are going; the others habitually keep one foot on the swell pedal, sacrificing the continuity and effect of the pedal part to that necessity. Of course there are some artists also who succeed in doing

wonderful things with the present imperfect means, but I think even they will probably feel the new action a relief, when they have got accustomed to it. I must admit that I was struck with the difficulty which appeared to be felt by some practised players in discarding the swell pedal and trusting to the new contrivance: but I cannot doubt that this difficulty would disappear with a few days' practice.

The second Recommendation of the College of Organists is that there be some contrivance to fix the swell pedal at any point. This has been met by a contrivance of Messrs. Gray and Davison: the swell pedal hitches of itself at any point when the foot is removed; it acts independently of the back swell action. As to the composition pedals. I think it may almost be laid down as a principle that the various *piano* compositions should lie together. No player is, I believe, quite above the possibility of making a mistake in the composition pedal he touches; and where there are many such pedals they must all lie rather close together. The risk of putting down any *ff* pedal when *piano* is meant seems to me a thing to be avoided. I have placed the *piano* for the pedal organ and couplers about the middle, and the *piano* for great and swell on both sides of it, the *ff*'s being at the two ends. I should say that, as I am accustomed to play on a small organ, I have not formed any decided habits in any of these respects, and I seem to myself to look on the various schemes with an unprejudiced eye.

If I have seemed presumptuous in expressing my opinions so freely, I beg pardon. My object is to elicit the views of those better qualified to judge than myself.

DISCUSSION.

The Chairman having invited discussion—

The Secretary said: It appears to me that Mr. Bosanquet attaches an undue amount of importance to the position of those stops that are controlled by composition pedals. For my own part I regard composition pedals really as necessary evils. They are terribly convenient things, and induce a player to use just a few stereotyped forms of his organ, instead of using the instrument in its almost infinite variety, simply because certain stops can be conveniently shot out by composition work. Mr. Bosanquet rather deduces an argument from Mr. Hopkins's book than quotes it. I think it is not stated in plain words that the choir draw-stops should be on the left hand.

Mr. Bosanquet.—Yes; Mr. Hopkins states quite clearly that he prefers the choir on the left.

The Secretary.—As against that I may state that I was a good deal concerned at the College of Organists in drawing up these Resolutions. We were much guided and influenced by Mr. Hopkins's experience, and he generally concurred in the Resolutions. I believe we are all very much in the position that has been described: that is, all of us who have an instrument cast in a certain form, if it is not easy of control, we are disgusted with it, and are always talking about its inconvenience, but we grow attached to the habit of finding our stops in certain positions. When the College of Organists first took action in this matter they were at great pains to ascertain the most common and familiar arrangement, and generally—if no principle to the contrary was involved—they recommended those arrangements which were most common and usual. One chief object was that players in going from instrument to instrument should not continually find themselves adrift. With regard to the new method of controlling the swell, I am not sure that anybody trying it for the first time would be able to judge impartially of it. For myself, when I was strapped in, I felt in a very helpless condition, and I could not but remark that even an experienced player—for Mr. Bosanquet will allow me to say that he played the organ as though he had considerable experience—made a great many involuntary actions of expression; for instance, when he had to turn over there was a *crescendo*, and at sundry other places a *crescendo* came when it was not wanted. At the same time I am quite sure it is not a matter to be judged too hastily from such accidents as these.

The Rev. J. Helmore.—May I be allowed to ask Mr. Bosanquet whether it would be practicable to make the swell to open by pressing backwards instead of forwards?

Mr. Bosanquet.—Yes, in fact I got the idea of the back swell—the very one which I am speaking of—from one made by Mr. Cooper, which was in St. Sepulchre's some years ago. It was an arrangement in which you leaned back to open the swell. But, as the swell is always the top row of keys, and you have to stretch out your arms to reach them, you cannot under any circumstances lean back when you want to play with any power. Mr. Cooper, as I am given to understand, used this arrangement solely for the purpose of obtaining a full *crescendo* climax on the great organ when he had the swell coupled to it; it was not intended for action on the swell by itself. It occurred to me that the natural position to obtain emphasis was leaning forward; when you press a considerable number of keys down it is more natural to lean forward than to throw yourself back at the same time; for instance, if you watch any player—I do not care how quiet

he may be—if he has a lot of very full chords to play, he will lean forward in putting them all down, so that the accent is obtained by a very natural and almost automatic process in that case. The only difficulty was in connecting the forward motion with the action on the swell. I imagined a lot of difficult and roundabout ways of doing it in the first instance; and this strap, which I think was suggested by Messrs. Gray and Davison, proved the simplest outcome of it altogether. You fasten it in a moment with the buckle, or you might fasten it more easily than by a buckle if you think fit. It may be buckled as tightly or loosely as you like. I do not think if it were pretty loosely buckled it would cause those effects to which Mr. Higgs alluded, and I confess I do not think there was very much of that. I think, considering one's natural want of experience with the arrangement, that it was wonderful to have so little of that. No doubt everything of this kind must have these defects. The swell pedal unquestionably has its defects, and the only way in which those difficulties are so well got over is by the long constant practice that excellent players have had with it. I think if they were to give anything like the same constant practice to this new arrangement they would soon find it a very effective thing indeed. You might unbuckle the strap swell when you want, and you can use the swell pedal quite independently of the strap.

Mr. Somers Clarke, jun.—I have not had the pleasure of seeing the organ Mr. Bosanquet speaks of, but I should be obliged if he would explain to me how the strap was applied. It strikes me, in the case of country organists—one very often sits under very curious performances in the country—and I cannot help thinking that if the performer were strapped in, that with every movement from one side to the other, for pulling out the stops and so on, the result would be very alarming. Would it be easy for the player to get in and out? because very often you see that the player moves backwards and forwards from the instrument; he does not wish to sit on the stool longer than is necessary.

Mr. Bosanquet.—I fastened an ordinary strap to the back of the seat, which turned on hinges; at first it was rather heavy, but I got them to lighten it, and eventually it moved very freely indeed. There are a couple of holes, I think, about the height of my shoulder; from this I pass the strap under my arms, and just buckle it. Most people can fasten a buckle very readily. It takes me about four to five seconds, but it would be easy to make a simpler fastening still.

Mr. Somers Clarke, jun.—Have you tried it with a surplice on?

Mr. Bosanquet.—No, but I do not think there would be any difficulty about that. I have used it sometimes passing

over the shoulder. I will explain another modification of the affair that I had completed quite roughly on our organ at St. John's College. It was fitted by a country builder, and in some ways I think the arrangement is very good. [Mr. Bosanquet drew a sketch illustrating the arrangement.] There was an arm fastened to the floor behind the seat, which carried an upright lever; from the top of that a strap passed through a couple of holes and passed round the performer. This is more easily done than in the arrangement of the organ by Messrs. Gray and Davison. In the organ by Messrs. Gray and Davison the seat was necessarily fastened down; * the adjustment of the movable back at the bottom did not admit of being disturbed, but the other is more simple to make, and it has the great convenience that it does not involve the fixing of the seat. But the great difficulty is in getting the mechanism to act lightly enough. It is essential that it should be comfortable that it should be very light indeed. I have been able to get this machine to act with sufficient lightness to be quite comfortable; but the one of Messrs. Gray and Davison was very light. It is possible in playing a delicate passage to give a decided accent on any particular note, almost on any part of the note; to play suspended notes where you want to give a slight accent at the beginning of the bar; it was possible to give an accent in the most perfect way, with hardly any movement at all. Anybody knows how easy it is to give considerable effect by slight accents delivered in that way, but ordinarily it has been quite impossible to do that whilst playing a pedal part at the same time.

Dr. Gladstone.—It seems to me that the most serious objection is that it would be almost impossible during the course of the same piece to fix the swell pedal if the strap has once been used—say, for instance, if you wished it for a climax.

Mr. Bosanquet.—There is no difficulty at all in that. You only put your foot on the pedal and fix it: the two things do not interfere with each other. It works backwards and forwards without doing anything when the swell pedal is fixed.

Professor Monk.—I suppose that some of us will remember that in one of the organs exhibited at the 1862 Exhibition the movement of the swell and the motion of the Venetian front was controlled by the mouth of the player by such a mouthpiece as that of the clarinet, for instance. Of course there the pneumatic apparatus was present in the whole instrument, and the moment a slight impetus was given by the mouth of the player various examples of bellows power were brought into use, and themselves lifted the front. I think we have all

* This has since been found unnecessary.

of us felt how great a luxury it would be to be able to control the movement of the front of the swell without using the pedal, especially by the freedom which would be given to the two feet. Having ventured to say this, I will also venture to say a word or two on my own behalf, entirely unconnected with the observations of the present paper. Some little time ago I had an idea that it might possibly be an advantage if some little movement could be given to the seat itself. This is entirely, of course, a matter of experiment. I got a personal friend of mine, who is connected with some branches of the organ trade, to make me a seat which would revolve. It was capable of receiving from the performer just a slight impulse in a direction either to his right or to his left. The motion is, of course, and must needs be, of the slightest. It seems just this, that the seat following the effort of the player, goes towards his right for the high part of the board, or towards his left for the low part of the board, and goes with him to the slightest extent. As I have said, this is quite an experiment, but I have had it fitted, and find it answer very well.

Mr. Bosanquet.—Does this affect the swell in any way?

Professor Monk.—Not in the slightest; I simply avail myself of the opportunity just to mention what is of itself too trifling a matter to be brought before the Association as a separate subject. I have one of these organ seats with me, and if any gentleman will be at all interested in seeing it I shall be very pleased to show it to him at the close of the meeting.

Dr. Gladstone.—May I ask one question with regard to fixing the swell pedal?—the only pedal I have had any experience of (of that kind) being one with more than one notch, which caught at one particular point in its descent, not at any other. That in the wretched instrument at the Bow and Bromley Institute not only stops when you do not wish it, but refuses to keep closed when you do. I do not know what is the cause; whether it is the vibration of the bellows, or what it may be, but something certainly causes this swell pedal to open of its own accord. It seems to me that the old-fashioned principle is the safest, but I should like to know a little more about the one mentioned.

Mr. Bosanquet.—This is not my contrivance at all. Messrs. Gray and Davison are responsible for it. I do not say that on the whole I should advocate it very strongly, or that I attach very great importance to it, but certainly it answered its purpose as far as I could see entirely. The principle of it is this: that about two inches from the end of the pedal is put a button rest, which is connected with a catch, which works in a rack. When you touch this button the pedal is released from the rack, and so long as you keep your foot on it the pedal is free to move, but as soon as you take your foot off

the button, the pedal sticks in the rack. The only difficulty I have found is to get the pedal to close exactly. There is some force requisite to depress the button. Under these circumstances it seemed to me if one was not very careful the button would rise before the pedal had entirely completed its upward course, and become hitched before it had reached the top. But I think that is to be got over if you cut away the top tooth. It is not adopted for the first time in my organ; I believe it has been in use for some other instruments made by that firm, and has given satisfaction. At all events there it is, and it undoubtedly effects the purpose when you get accustomed to it; but, like other things, it needs a little practice. Sometimes the person puts his toe on the end of the pedal, and tries to force it open without touching the button; and it will allow of that being done, but you cannot force it up again. I think, with a very little attention, you would be able to use it with more convenience. I only use it when I want to keep the pedal down for a considerable time.

Mr. Stephens.—It appears to me the process is not quite complete, because it does not enable you to fix the pedal exactly where you wish it. The rack must be fitted with notches after all, and you are at all events at the mercy of the notches. I think the great desideratum is to be able to fix the pedal exactly where you desire it. There is a certain amount of quality obtained by coupling the swell reeds to the great organ, and you cannot arrive exactly at what you wish unless you can fix the pedal where you desire. It appears to me a very desirable thing to be able to do so, but it appears as if the invention has yet to be made which would enable you to accomplish so desirable an end. With regard to the mode of using the swell of Mr. Bosanquet, I have not had practical experience, and I fear I should find it very awkward at first, and that I should be giving my listeners the idea that I was very much troubled with spasms, and, to use an organist's language, we should certainly have involuntary *crescendos*.

Mr. Bosanquet.—Perhaps Mr. Stephens is not acquainted with the modern balance swell pedal, which does attain the object he speaks of. You work the pedal by the toe and the heel, and the shutters of the swell are placed vertically instead of horizontally.

Dr. Gladstone.—That is like the one at the Bow and Bromley Institute: you cannot close it quickly if you wish, and it will not remain closed when you have closed it.

The Chairman.—I think, ladies and gentlemen, this subject has now perhaps had your full attention. Another paper of great interest is waiting for your audition, but before proceeding with that I think we must give our thanks to Mr. Bosanquet, and also to Professor Monk, for the opportunity he has given us of inspecting his new invention.

The SECRETARY.—With the Chairman's permission, I should like to say one thing in relation to Mr. Monk's kind offer to exhibit his new organ seat. It will be in the memory of those present at the general meeting last week that the Council called attention to a little incident that happened about this time last year, when Dr. Stainer brought down some curious MS. horn music, which excited a good deal of interest. The Council think the Musical Association might be made very useful if those members who have portable curiosities of any kind, such as books or instruments, would kindly bring them for exhibition. If any one will communicate with me I shall be glad to announce their intention to exhibit anything curious at any of our meetings.

ON THE BEATS OF MISTUNED HARMONIC CONSONANCES.

By R. H. M. Bosanquet, Esq., M.A.

The present Paper forms a continuation of one presented to the Association a short time ago. The subject was first put prominently before the Association in Mr. Spottiswoode's Paper "On Beats and Combination Tones." I subsequently showed some of the elementary experimental methods by means of which I attempted to deal with the questions raised. Since that time I have been placed in possession of much larger means for dealing with these questions. I propose to give to-day some account of the experiments and results I have since arrived at. The apparatus does not differ in principle from that formerly exhibited to you; and as the improvement in its efficiency is principally due to the introduction of a large bellows driven by a steam-engine, and the experiments themselves are not suitable for verification by an audience, I have not attempted to bring any of the apparatus here.

The practical question I have dealt with is, What are the actual sounds produced where consonances such as the octave, twelfth, fifteenth, &c., are slightly mistuned?

König has established that beats are heard in these cases, even when the notes employed are of great purity. He did not ascertain experimentally the nature of the beats—that is to say, what the notes were that varied in intensity; and did not prove to my satisfaction that the beats consisted of sounds other than musical notes. My efforts have been directed to supply this information by simply listening to the sounds, which were produced continuously and for a long time together.

Experiments.

The engine and bellows* being adjusted to run continuously and quietly, I began to follow the course of König's experiments at the point where he deals with the combinations of the note C, following his form not accurately, but with such divergences as the difference in the apparatus suggested. After going through one or two sets in the way hereinafter described, I concentrated my attention on the analysis of beats,

* See *Philosophical Magazine*, October, 1880.

and specially on those of mistuned consonances of the form $h : 1$. It will be seen that after a time I entirely discarded resonators, having convinced myself that, so far as they were concerned, the beats of mistuned consonances, other than unisons, with the beat notes, difference and combination tones of all orders, and, in fact, all that I had to observe, were of a purely subjective nature, and were extinguished by resonators properly used, so far as my arrangements enabled me to perceive.

The mode in which I then pursued the observations on the beats of the mistuned consonances in question was, to adjust the notes and leave them sounding uniformly and continuously by the hour together. I then walked about the room, listening to the combination in all the various forms in which it presented itself; went outside and came in again, always keeping in view the question—what are the sounds that these beats consist of?

It is hard to believe that a question to which the answer is tolerably simple could be so difficult. Yet it is *very* difficult; it is one of the most difficult things I ever tried to do, to analyse these apparently complicated sounds into their elements by the ear alone. And when I state my results, I must not be taken to mean that the elements I mention are all that are present. In fact, one of the great difficulties is that there appear to be such a number of different sounds. Some of these are probably due to the imagination; others probably exist in small intensity. And I am satisfied that there still exists a large field of work in the further prosecution of this subject. But of the main result I have no doubt whatever, and that is:—

The beats of mistuned consonances of the form $h : 1$, where h is nearly some whole number, consist mainly of variations of intensity of the lower note when the beats of the harmonics are eliminated.

I was prepared for this result in the case of the octave by my preliminary experiments (*Philosophical Magazine*, viii., p. 293), but did not proceed further till I had verified it and got my ear to perceive it readily under the new conditions, which required two or three days. I then got Mr. Parratt to come and listen. He was much disturbed by the trifling noises from the engine, belts, &c., and I blew the bellows myself for a time. Eventually he came to the same conclusion, but with an amount of hesitation and difficulty which showed me what an important element practice is in these observations.

I then started these observations with the mistuned twelfth, proceeding in the same way. I seemed to have the same difficulty as before in seizing the phenomenon; and when I eventually decided that these beats were also on the lower note, it was not in pursuance of any preconceived conclusion; for I had no idea at that time of the explanation I now give,

and certainly none of the presence of the second difference-tone, or its identity with one of König's beat notes.

Having got so far, I found the remaining verification, of the beats of the mistuned double octave, somewhat easier. These are also on the lower note when they are heard. I have never heard the beats of a mistuned consonance with any wider interval, with the notes I employ, as clear and unmistakable phenomena. Such beats may be discernible by more acute ears, or with notes of a more powerful quality, as they were discerned by König. But in such cases it will be incumbent on the observer to purge the beats from the suspicion of containing the beats of harmonics, as I have done.

Mr. Parratt subsequently convinced himself, as before, that the beats of the twelfth and double octave were all heard on the lower notes. I endeavoured, as far as possible, to make his observations independent by avoiding communicating my conclusions to him beforehand.

The elimination of the beats of the harmonics depends on the following considerations: The notes employed were examined, with and without resonators, as to the presence of harmonics. These, so far as they are objective, are readily detected with resonators. The beats of the harmonics, where they existed objectively, were also examined with resonators. After a little practice the sound of these beats became familiar enough to prevent their being confused with the beats of the low notes, and the two sets of beats could be observed independently.

The only harmonic that exists in these notes in sensible intensity is the twelfth; and this does not appear to originate in the same manner as the principal note. It is heard separately, as it were, and as if it had an independent origin. It seems probable that it arises in connection with the movements of the air about the mouthpiece, and not by resonance in the cavity of the bottle, like the principal note. At all events, whatever the cause may be, the effect is that the presence of this note is readily distinguished and allowed for, and there is no risk of its being mixed up with the rest of the phenomenon.

The notes employed are of moderate strength. It seems to me that the employment of notes of great power is open to the objection that it introduces all sorts of transformations depending on the greatness of the displacements; and in this respect alone König's procedure is open to considerable objection. I have confined myself to notes of moderate strength lying in those regions of the scale which are in ordinary use in music. It is phenomena thus presented that we really seek to understand; and I do not think that any thing is gained by pushing the investigation into those extreme regions where

it is possible and highly probable that the ordinary laws of hearing become modified.

The first series of notes examined in the above manner were the set of pairs:—

$$\begin{array}{c} C : c \\ C : g \\ C : c' \\ \hline C : e' \\ C : g' \\ C : c'' \end{array}$$

The beats produced by mistuning, when cleared of the harmonic beats, were heard only in the first three cases.

The second set of pairs was:—

$$\begin{array}{c} c : c' \\ c : g' \\ \hline c : c'' \\ c : e'' \\ c : g'' \end{array}$$

The beats in question were only heard in the first two cases.

The third set was:—

$$\begin{array}{c} c' : c'' \\ \hline c' : g'' \\ c' : c''' \end{array}$$

The beats in question were only heard in the first case.

In the few experiments hitherto made with notes of higher pitch, the beats of mistuned consonances of the form $h : 1$ were not heard when the beats of the harmonics were eliminated, unless the power of the notes was very greatly increased. In this region, however, König's own observations are very full and complete.

We notice at once the decrease in the range within which the phenomena are heard as we rise in the scale. This is at once accounted for on the hypothesis of transformation, by the consideration that the displacements to which the higher notes give rise are much smaller than those of the lower notes. If we knew the law of the decrease, we might obtain a relation between the coefficients of the different terms in the expression for the character of the transforming mechanism. König has attempted to formulate a law of decrease; and I have done so on a previous occasion; but this part of the subject is as yet too hypothetical to admit of satisfactory treatment.

Objective and Subjective Phenomena.

Resonators.

On beginning work I endeavoured, in the first instance, to ascertain what evidence resonators are capable of furnishing as to the nature of binary combinations. There are a few points in connection with their use which require attention.

I have always found difficulty in getting results of a definite character with resonators, whether applied directly to one ear in the manner described by Helmholtz, or connected with one ear by means of a flexible tube, as practised by others. There are three difficulties which occur: (1) pressing the tube or orifice into the ear is apt to close the inner passage of that organ; (2) if the tube or orifice is applied lightly, it does not completely occupy the passage, and external sound comes past it into the ear; and (3) it is impossible so to stop the unused ear as to prevent the external impressions from arriving there and causing confusion.

The method I ultimately adopted was as follows: A copper tube of $\frac{1}{4}$-inch diameter was bent into a semicircle, the diameter of which was nearly 8 inches. At the middle of the tube, and at right angles to its plane, another copper tube was inserted, 2 inches long, which tapered down to an orifice $\frac{1}{8}$-inch in diameter; this served to communicate with the interior of a resonator by means of a small flexible tube. The extremities of the semicircle were turned inwards and upwards; and into them two brass tubes were inserted, $\frac{3}{4}$-inch long and $\frac{1}{8}$-inch in internal diameter, screwed on the outside. Over each of these was fitted a brass tube, screwed inside, carrying an ivory nipple, such as is used for ear-trumpets. I generally covered the nipple with a couple of thicknesses of thin india-rubber tube.

When used, the semicircle is passed under the chin with the resonator attachment projecting in front. The nipples are at first screwed back as far as possible, brought opposite the orifices of the ears, and then screwed forward until they enter the ears. They are then gradually advanced until the passages are closed to external sounds. Something depends on the way the tube is held. With practice it is possible to hold it so that the passages are closed to external sounds without screwing the nipples in very tight. When they are screwed very tight it is rather unpleasant, and even painful. But it is necessary constantly to be on one's guard against being deceived by an occasional entrance of external sounds if the nipples are not quite tight. This instrument was made for

me some time ago by Mr. Walters, of Moorgate Street; it has already been described ("Proceedings of the Musical Association, 1879-80," p. 18).

The resonators I employ are bottles fitted with corks having apertures of various sizes. I sometimes tune them with water, in the same way as the bottle-notes; sometimes I insert tubes into the apertures to lower the pitch. A bit of small glass tubing passed through the cork is connected by an india-rubber tube with the above-described ear-piece.

By means of these arrangements I some time ago examined the nature of the ordinary first difference tone, and convinced myself that it is not capable of exciting a resonator (*loc. cit.* p. 20). This conclusion has also been arrived at by others.* In short, the difference tone of Helmholtz, or first beat note of König, as ordinarily heard, is not objective in its character. It is therefore subjective. (See Helmholtz, "Tonempfindungen," fourth edition, p. 259.) In making the experiment of listening for the difference tone through a resonator, it is necessary to be careful that the ears are both closed to external sounds; otherwise the external notes will penetrate through, the difference tone will appear, and the completeness of the cut-off effected by the resonator will be entirely lost.

When beginning the regular course of experiments according to the general outline of König's work, I was careful, in the first instance, to examine the various masses of sound presented, with resonators arranged as above indicated. In examining, for instance, the intervals made by the note C with the various notes of the octave above it (up to *c*), I first fixed the resonator at some one pitch, and then ran the movable note up through the octave. Then, as this did not seem a good process for analysis, I set the mistuned octave beating, or any other combination it was desired to examine, and ran the pitch of the resonator up and down with water to see if anything could be detected. And here I came across an observation that puzzled me for some time.

Suppose the mistuned octave C : *c* was sounding, and I examined the lower note with the resonator: sometimes it appeared loud and steady, at other times as if beating powerfully. On removing the resonator attachment from the ear, the lower note was always heard to beat powerfully. The explanation was simple. When the nipples of the resonator attachment fitted tightly into the ears, nothing reached the ear but the uniform vibrations of the resonator sounding C. But if there was the slightest looseness between the nipple and the passage of either ear, the second note (*c*) of the combination got in, and gave rise to the subjective difference tone (first beat note of König), by interference of which with

* Preyer, "Akustische Untersuchungen," p. 13.

the C I explain the beats on that note. *These beats are therefore subjective.*

A considerable number of combinations, including examples of the principal forms of beat, rattle, or roll, were examined in this way; and when the precautions above indicated were attended to, the results were in all cases to negative the objective existence of all forms of beats and beat notes or difference tones, except the beats which arise from the interference of approximate unisons, which beats arise from both notes acting on the resonator simultaneously. This of course includes the beats produced by objective harmonics.

Course of General Experiments.

The following is the detailed examination of the combinations of the note C, made in a continuous and connected manner. The results have a general correspondence with those of König. The numerous rattles and rolls of beats mentioned were not further analysed for the most part: the analysis of these is very difficult; and, as has been already stated, a separate investigation is required in every such case. Some attention was devoted to beats of the mistuned fifth, both in the case mentioned and in others; but no final result was arrived at. In two different cases of mistuned fifths (2 : 3, nearly), I had a strong impression that the note 7 formed an important part of the beat. This would be a summation-tone of the second order, thus $2 \times 2 + 3$. I am confident that it did not arise from harmonics.

These experiments were made after some experience had been gained:—

C_1 : C.
Rattle up to—
C : F.
Slow beats up to—
C : G, smooth fifth. Roll only perceptible when the ear is held close to the two sources of sound.
——, 5 beats sharp. Perception of pitch very difficult in this part of the scale. There is a heavy beat like a knock, which appears to affect the whole mass of sound.* The low beat of C_1 is only distinguishable with difficulty, or hardly at all.

(Another occasion.) Mr. Parratt describes the fifth C : G, beating slowly, as consisting of E♭ and C_1 in addition to the primary notes; the mass of the beat is at

* I take this entry to show that no progress had been made with the resolution of the phenomenon into its elements.

least partly on E♭. I do not hear the E♭, but seem to hear the note E.

(Another occasion.) Mr. Parratt is clear that the beat of the mistuned fifth C : G is on C_1 alone; but he still hears the E♭ in the mass of tone. I seem to hear the beats both on C and C_1; but I have a difficulty in separating the octaves in this deep pitch.

——, 8 beats sharp. Clear rattle, with suspicion of roll beside it.

——, 10 beats sharp. Beats just distinguishable. Roll.

C : B♭. Rattle emerges.

Below—

C : *c*, 8 beats can be counted.

——, 4 beats very distinct. Consist entirely of variation of intensity of lower note. This effect is very clear and remarkable.

——, a very slow beat flat. Here it was easy to recognise the effect of the shift of phase in the apparent great increase of volume of the lower note at one period of the change. The upper note was not perceptibly affected.

C : *c*. A slight rich roll with smooth tone. The production of the roll depends a good deal on the phase, as is seen by leading up to *c* with a very slow beat.

The twelfth of the C was plainly distinguishable, but it appeared to keep separate from the mass of tone; it was perfectly steady and unaffected by combination with *c*.

C : *c*, 2 beats sharp. Phenomena undistinguishable from 2 beats below.

——, 4 beats sharp. Perhaps a little less roll in the strong part of the beat.

——, 8 beats sharp. The mass of the beats is of pitch near C; but the exact pitch is very difficult to distinguish. It is a deep heavy rattle, quite distinct in pitch from the upper note.

C : *e*. If there is any slow beat in passing through this, it is very difficult to distinguish. I am inclined to negative it.

C : *f*♯. Roll.

Slow beats up to—

C : *g*. These beats consist of alternations of intensity of C. They are more difficult to count than those of C : *c*. I counted them at 5 below.

——. Slow beats above.

C : *b*♭. Rattle, turning into beats easily counted at 4 below *c′*. These beats also consist of variations of intensity of the lower note.

C : *c′*. The beats above *c′* were also counted at 4 above, while the engine was going, without difficulty.

Above this, in the neighbourhood of the binary consonances C : e' &c., I have never been able to obtain slow beats in such a way that they could be readily perceived (even without the engine) or certainly counted.

The mode adopted to examine cases in which the beats could not be perceived was to introduce a third note, such as c', which gave beats with the C, and tune it true. Then any note, such as e' or g', could be readily tuned so that the whole three notes gave 1, 2, 3, or 4 beats. When this had been done, the intermediate note c' was removed. If the pair examined was capable of giving beats at all, they should then have been audible.

The details of the above course furnish no new results; I have not, therefore, thought it worth while to give similar courses for other sets of notes. Those results which are worthy of mention have been already stated.

Theory of the Beats of Mistuned Consonances of the form h : 1.

Let n be the frequency of the lowest note, m the number of beats per second. Then the mistuned octave is $n : 2n \pm m$; the mistuned twelfth is $n : 3n \pm m$; and so on.

Beats of the mistuned octave:—

$$n : 2n \pm m.$$

Number of beats $= m$.

m variations of intensity of the lower note (n) are produced by interference of notes n and $n \pm m$; and $n \pm m$ is the first combination tone (difference tone of form $p - q$) of the primaries n and $2n \pm m$.

This rests chiefly on the observation that the beats, when the octave harmonic is eliminated, consist entirely of variations of intensity of the lower note.

The existence of the first combination tone in question ($p - q$) is well known. It is easily demonstrated in the neighbouring case of intervals not far removed from the fifth, when the beats of the first two combination tones are specially prominent (secondary beats of König).

Beats of the mistuned twelfth:—

$$n : 3n \pm m.$$

Number of beats $= m$.

m variations of intensity of the lower note (n) are produced by interference of notes n and $n \pm m$. And $n \pm m$ is the second combination tone (difference tone of form $2p - q$) of the primaries n and $3n \pm m$.

This rests also chiefly on the observation that the beats,

when the third partials are eliminated, consist entirely of variations of intensity of the lower note.

The existence of the second combination tone in question $(2p - q)$ is demonstrated in many cases by König. It is easily heard in the case of intervals near the octave high in the scale. It is also easily detected by the secondary beats which it forms with the first combination tone in the case of intervals near the fifth—also less easily by the secondary beats which it forms with the third combination tone in intervals near 2 : 5, at which point the second and third combination tones coincide.

Beats of the mistuned fifteenth or double octave :—

$$n : 4n \pm m.$$

Number of beats $= m$.

m variations of intensity of the lower note (n) are produced by interference of notes n and $n \pm m$. And $n \pm m$ is the third combination tone (difference tone of form $3p - q$) of the primaries n and $4n \pm m$.

This rests also chiefly on the observation that the beats, when the fourth partials are eliminated, consist entirely of variations of intensity of the lower note.

The existence of the third combination tone in question $(3p - q)$ is demonstrated in many cases by König. It is heard not so easily as the lower combination tones, in the case of intervals near the twelfth high in the scale. It is also less easily detected by the secondary beats which it forms with the second combination tone in the case of intervals near 2 : 5, at which point the second and third combination tones coincide —also, much less easily, by the secondary beats which it forms with the fourth combination tone in the case of intervals near 2 : 7, at which point the third and fourth combination tones coincide.

Beats of the mistuned tierce (two octaves and a major third):—

$$n : 5n \pm m.$$

These beats are much less easily detected in pure notes of the ordinary strength than any of the foregoing. They are recorded by König; but I have never heard them clearly. As it is certain that König's notes were not perfectly pure, and he does not analyse the beats, we cannot tell whether the variations of the lower note were produced in his experiments. If they were, they are to be accounted for in a similar manner.

Number of beats $= m$.

m variations of intensity of lower note (n) are produced by interference of notes n and $n \pm m$. And $n \pm m$ is the fourth combination-tone (difference-tone of form $4p - q$) of the primaries n and $5n \pm m$.

The existence of the fourth combination-tone in question $(4p - q)$ is demonstrated directly by König in the case of intervals near the double octave $c''' : c^{v}$. It is also less easily detected by the secondary beat which it forms with the third combination tone in the case of intervals near 2 : 7, at which point the third and fourth combination tones coincide.

Beats of the mistuned consonance of the nineteenth are recorded by König :—

$$n : 6n \pm m.$$

Number of beats $= m$.

m variations of intensity of lower note (n) might be produced by interference of n and $n \pm m$. And $n \pm m$ is the fifth combination tone (difference tone of form $5p - q$) of the primaries n and $6n \pm m$.

The existence of the fifth combination tone in question $(5p - q)$ is not anywhere directly demonstrated. Secondary beats, which might be produced by its interference with the fourth combination tone, are recorded by König in the neighbourhood of the interval $c : d''$.

Beats of the mistuned consonance 1 : 7 are recorded by König. These might be produced by a sixth combination-tone (difference tone of form $6p - q$) of the primaries n and $7n \pm m$.

Beats of the mistuned consonance 1 : 8 are recorded. These might be produced by a seventh combination tone (difference tone of form $7p - q$) of the primaries $8n \pm m$.

As far as my own experience goes, however, I have no direct and palpable evidence of beats of mistuned consonances higher than 1 : 4, or of the existence of combination tones higher than the third $(3p - q)$ in recognisable intensity. Up to this point the phenomena are quite clear; and there is no possible doubt as to their nature.

But in considering these limited results it must be remembered: (1) that I have restricted myself to notes of very moderate intensity, so that the phenomena might correspond as nearly as possible to those which are presented to our ears in practice; and (2) that, although I was unable to get rid entirely of the presence of upper partials in all cases, yet the phenomena were subjected to a careful and prolonged analysis by listening under varied conditions, until the effect of the upper partials could be separated out and eliminated with certainty. And we have at all events no security that these upper partials did not give rise to many of König's results; indeed, it is almost certain that they must have entered into those results.

Conclusions.

There can be no doubt that the beat notes of König are the same as the higher difference tones of Helmholtz; that they

really exist; and that they are the cause of the beats which are the subject of this paper. There can be no doubt also that these beat notes or higher difference tones are capable of originating directly from the primaries without the intervention of the lower difference tones. The theory of this question is somewhat abstruse, and is unsuitable for a communication to the Musical Association. I have attempted to deal with it elsewhere.* This removes the objection raised by König and others to the theory of difference tones as commonly stated.

The actual beats heard in consonances such as the octave, twelfth, and fifteenth, when cleared of the beats of harmonics, consist of variations of intensity of the lower note of the combination. These beats are caused by the interference of the lower note of the combination in question with the beat notes of König, or higher difference tones of Helmholtz, in the manner already detailed.

DISCUSSION.

Mr. A. J. Ellis, F.R.S.—I wish I had had the opportunity of reading Mr. Bosanquet's printed paper on this subject, so that I might have known some of its details. At present I can only express my great gratification that this very difficult subject is being investigated by so competent an observer, and that he has got results of very considerable acoustical importance, which show that these beats are variations of intensity, and not, as was supposed, beats of the upper partial tones, or anything of that kind. I suppose your theory of the way in which they are produced is published?

Mr. Bosanquet.—It was read before the Physical Society a year ago, and was published in their "Proceedings" about the middle of this year.

Mr. Ellis.—It is a mathematical theory?

Mr. Bosanquet.—Yes.

Mr. Ellis.—One is often obliged to leave out a great deal of detail to get it into mathematical form, as Helmholtz has done in a great many cases, which is always more or less hazardous. May I ask if you are able to attack the whole problem, or are you only able to attack it when reduced into a very abstract form?

Mr. Bosanquet.—To attack the whole problem would need an intimate knowledge of the whole framework of the ear. One is obliged to frame certain hypotheses.

Mr. Ellis.—Another point of great importance is that the

* *Philosophical Magazine*, 1881. Series v., vol. xi., p. 492.

beats are subjective, not objective. I consider that of very great importance to establish. I did not quite collect from your observations whether you got that result with regard to the composition of the difference tones which König made out to consist of particular beats.

Mr. Bosanquet.—I consider those are prior to the beats; that the so-called beat tones are really the difference tones of different orders, and it is by their dissonance with other notes that the beats appear. It so happens that it does not matter whether you reckon forward or backward; you come to the same thing.

Mr. Ellis.—I think it will rather revolutionise our ideas in many respects of the theories of the beats of dissonances, because when you have very compound tones beating together, such as these reed tones, of course you have only a succession of simple tones which are beating together, and therefore it is only a greater complication than this simple one; and I think it is rather opening out a new view of the subject, which I am very glad has been opened out by a person who is capable of doing it in a scientific manner, like Mr. Bosanquet. In König's paper, which was brought forward at this Association by Mr. Spottiswoode, who translated it, there were a great many gaps left to be explained, and it was not at all clear what the beats were which were produced. I think the acoustical world may be very much indebted to Mr. Bosanquet for his observations on this subject, especially for his having succeeded in bringing out something like a mathematical theory of the subject.

Mr. Blaikley.—I should like to join in thanking Mr. Bosanquet for having taken up this subject and working it out so thoroughly. It is a matter of very great interest, and, owing to the great difficulty different observers have of really judging what they do hear, it has certainly become confused. Shortly after the time that Mr. Spottiswoode read his paper here, I had an opportunity in Paris of seeing Mr. König and speaking with him on his experiments; and my own opinion was rather different to his as regards the extent of purity that existed in the tone of his two large forks. He took a pair of forks, a mistuned octave, and there was a beating note heard. He said to me, "You hear distinctly—there can be no doubt about it—that the beating note is the lower one." I could not say that I heard it so. I heard distinctly the octave beating, and I said, "It is the upper fork beating with the second partial of the lower fork." He said, "The second partial does not exist in sufficient strength to be heard." It is just a question of the difficulty two observers may have, both competent to hear these notes, to observe exactly what does take place. I am sure, when we come to hear Mr. Bosanquet's paper fully, we shall be all much interested in informing our-

selves of the methods he has taken to eliminate all chance of error as regards what is actually observed in the matter.

Mr. Bosanquet.—The only indications given in any of Mr. König's papers as to the nature of the notes that vary in intensity is in one place where he is speaking of the beats of a mistuned octave, where he says distinctly that the effect is that lower and higher notes appear alternately. I have never had the opportunity of experimenting with any good example of a continuous-sounding fork, and I have always thought, in the small observations I have been able to make with forks that are only struck or bowed, that his description appeared to be very accurate, as far as I could judge. It always seemed to me that there was some wave in the octave as well as in the lower note.

Mr. Blaikley.—In those cases where the forks were only bowed or struck, his strong point was that the beat was on the lower fork only, as I understand. I have no doubt, now, it was both the lower fork and the octave. What was beating to me was the octave, and I could not get that out of my head, so that I did not observe the beat, if there were any, on the lower fork.

The Rev. T. Helmore.—Is it not true that different human ears hear very differently?

Mr. Bosanquet.—I think very possibly, but there is scarcely any instance to my knowledge where any definite difference that would depend on the mechanism of the ear has been satisfactorily proved. There is one small difference, I believe. I have succeeded in proving a difference in what would be called a damping power between Mr. Parratt's ear and my own—the gentleman with whom I have made a great many observations. But the difference is so small that it might possibly be due to errors of observation. It cannot be said that there is anything approaching a mechanical difference between the ears of different people in the broad sense, that is at all demonstrated. Of course in the nerve power of the ear there are differences of an enormous character, but that is quite a different thing to the mechanical constitution.

The Rev. T. Helmore.—A friend of mine was exceedingly fond of music, and had a good ear generally, but he could not hear the chirping of crickets or grasshoppers when I could hear them very distinctly.

Mr. Bosanquet.—In that sense there is a difference. Those differences may be due to the absence of the top of the mechanism of the ear. I was thinking of the ordinary region of the scale.

The Chairman.—Ladies and Gentlemen, I think I may have the privilege of offering to Mr. Bosanquet, and to the other gentlemen who have favoured us with their remarks on this subject, your cordial thanks. It is of great consequence

to us musicians that persons with also a capacity for music are now devoting attention to the scientific elements of which music is composed. It has been in former times much to be regretted that when physicists directed their care to musical subjects they had not a practical knowledge of music to bring to bear on the investigation. So while musicians were striving in one direction, and men of science were working in another, the results of their labours were not united, because they did not come together on sympathetic grounds. Very large advances have been made in the investigation on the scientific side of music in recent years, and there can be very little question that practical music itself, and the theory of harmony more particularly even than the structure of instruments, will derive some light from all the investigations which are being made. The point which is brought before us this afternoon appears to be urgent, and one which will be of great importance to the future attention of persons who may thoroughly investigate it. I believe that beyond what is at present obvious to our general capacity to understand, there is a deeplying truth in what is put forward, and that it will be of very great consequence to us all to come to a clear comprehension of it. It is a very interesting point which was just mooted, as to the different powers of different ears. I could cite many instances of persons who could hear lower or higher notes than others were able to detect, and that bears also upon the question of the possibility that smaller animals can hear acuter sounds, and that the larger animals can hear graver sounds than our ears can detect. Another very important point for reflection is as to how far one's own inclinations are concerned in the supposed fixity of the sound that is offered to the attention, and how far subjectivity and objectivity are to be taken into account in the analysis of a given sound. That it has not escaped the care of Mr. Bosanquet and his previous ally in his observations, Mr. Parratt, helps very much to give us confidence in the remarks that have been brought before us, and for my part I tender to the reader of the paper my best thanks, in which I hope you will all concur.

Mr. Bosanquet then proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which was carried unanimously.

DECEMBER 5, 1881.

JOHN STAINER, ESQ., M.A., MUS. DOC.,

VICE-PRESIDENT, IN THE CHAIR.

THE CULTIVATION OF CHURCH MUSIC.

By W. H. MONK, ESQ.

Two accidents in combination must form my excuse for the present attempt to address you on so important a subject as Church Music. I was asked to read a similar paper at the recent session of the Church Congress at Newcastle. After my return in the middle of October, and while my mind was still occupied with the subject, our worthy Secretary inquired whether I could occupy a blank unexpectedly occurring in his arrangement of papers for the Musical Association. With great diffidence I inquired whether he thought an afternoon might be thus occupied, and he was good enough to say it was a "grand subject," and would be acceptable. But I must disclaim any intention of going into any one of the practical parts of the subject, since to do so within an hour's compass, in a way worthy of this Association and of my audience, would be simply impossible. What I really wish to do is to put before you certain facts as regards the "Cultivation of Church Music" in England, with a proposal for a distinct step in advance, which I trust you may be disposed to encourage.

In the year 1861, just twenty years ago, it occurred to some eminent persons that it might be beneficial to the Church if some of the "burning questions" which interest her members could be discussed in a more or less public way, and in a friendly spirit of co-operation. The fruit of their deliberations was the so-called "Church Congress" held in that year, and for the first time, in Cambridge.

In the following year, 1862, a similar session was held in Oxford; but at neither of these did the subject of church music obtain a place. In 1863, however, at the third session, at Manchester, a paper on this subject was read by our own President, the Rev. Sir F. A. Gore Ouseley, Professor in the

University of Oxford, illustrated by a choir under the direction of Dr. E. G. Monk.

It will be desirable to give the shortest possible account of this and of similar papers in subsequent years. I should like to put before you, in as few words as possible, what has been said on a subject of natural interest to a musician at this series of meetings of the only Church organisation that has entertained the subject at all. Sir F. Ouseley on this occasion traced the growth of church music from the ordinary reading voice, not musical, through the employment of the monotone and the choral recitative, as used in the preces, versicles, responses, &c., to the measurable Psalm-chant; thence to the service and the anthem. The programme of the illustrations will best indicate the contents of the lecture itself:—

Gloria to Benedictus in G minor. Farrant.
Gloria to Jubilate in A. Croft.
"Hosanna to the Son." Gibbons.
"Thou knowest, Lord." Purcell.
"God is gone up." Croft.
Hymn 193, "Hymns Ancient and Modern," to the Old 113th ("the finest of all metrical tunes").

A shorter paper was afterwards read by Dr. Monk on "Congregational Music: its Desirableness, and the means of its Cultivation." A reference to the published report of this meeting reminded me that I addressed a few words to the members, in which I ventured to point out the great difficulty arising from the unfortunate ignorance of the great body of the clergy of the subject, and their consequent inability to take part in its *direction* in church; and a similar deficiency on the part of many a good organist, unable to sing, and therefore to act with effect as choirmaster.

In the year following (1864) the Congress met at Bristol, when the chief speaker was Professor Hullah, who took occasion to advocate the employment of women's voices in church choirs: "One about to organise a new choir is surely not called upon to prove why women *should* sing in it, but has rather a right to ask why they should *not*. The reasons should be very weighty which could justify the inhibition of one-half the human race from exercising to the glory of God gifts with which He has often so richly endowed them, and which they are so often enabled to cultivate to such high excellence."

A second paper was read by the Rev. Dr. Hayne, on "Congregational Chanting, with something to say on the three Systems: 1. That of single chants; 2. That of double chants; 3. That of Gregorian tones." He expresses his "conclusion (arrived at after great practical experience) that

the best and most satisfactory system is to have both choir and congregation singing in unison, the one leading and the other vastly increasing the effect by bringing out the melody with the massiveness and power only to be secured by the union of many men's voices." Many a choir, whose present singing is weak and miserable, might by this means offer in God's house a really good musical service.

A third paper was read by Mr. C. L. Higgins on "The Management of the Choir, and the Arrangement of the Musical Service"; and the Rev. R. Rayson, Precentor of Worcester, the Dean of Ely (Dr. Goodwin, now Bishop of Carlisle), and others, spoke. The former complained of the too frequent omission of all music from the service for Holy Communion.

In 1865 the Church Congress met at Norwich, and the reader of the only paper on music was my lamented friend the late Rev. Dr. Dykes. It was historical, from the Canto Fermo to Wesley; and the following programme was sung in illustration by the cathedral choir:—

The Ambrosian "Te Deum."
Anthem, "O give thanks." Aldrich (Palestrina).
Merbeck's Creed.
"If ye love Me." Tallis.
"Blessed be the God and Father." Wesley.

The writer went rather minutely into the vexed question of chants, Gregorian or Anglican, and into the rationale of the "Musical Edition of the Book of Common Prayer," edited by Merbecke, the year after the publication of the First Book of Edward VI. It is a most thoughtful and suggestive paper, as those who knew the author would expect, and well worth perusal.

The place of the next meeting was York, in the following year (1866), and a lecture was then delivered by Sir Roundell Palmer on "English Hymnody, with reference chiefly to its use in the Public Worship of the Church of England." The *musical* part of the subject is excluded in the first sentence, and it seems difficult to explain why, notwithstanding, a selection of hymns was sung by a choir under the direction of Dr. E. G. Monk.

In 1867, at Wolverhampton, the Rev. Sir F. A. Gore Ouseley read an important paper on the "Musical Training of the Clergy," from which I extract a sentence or two: "I should very much like to see much more encouragement given to the study and practice of music among undergraduates. Unmusical authorities in the universities *naturally* disapprove of, and therefore discourage, the cultivation of music. They regard it simply as a form of idleness, and as an obstacle to classical and mathematical studies. And it must be admitted

that it may easily became so, if abused. But, under proper regulations and restrictions, the study and practice of music afford advantages which more than outweigh the dangers and drawbacks to which they are subject." He goes on to describe the failure and abandonment of an attempt, some years before, to found musical classes in Oxford under the Professor of Music, aided by the Choragus and Coryphæus of the University.

At the same meeting a paper was contributed by the Rev. Thomas Helmore, on "Choral Music, with special reference to the Joining of all the People in Sacred Song." It treats of the means of sustaining the choral service in the constitution of choirs, and the dissemination of the power of singing: and it recommends that the character of the music to be sung should be: 1. Holy (as expressing more strongly than the loosely employed "sacred," the first requirement in this, as in everything connected with the worship of the Most Holy God); 2. Best of its kind; 3. Devotional, rather then sensational. Some excellent remarks will be found as to church music in its ancient *liturgical* use.

In October, 1868, the Church Congress met at Dublin, and it was natural and fitting that a lecture (with illustrations by a choir of about 200 voices), should be delivered by Sir Robert Stewart, Mus. Doc., Professor in the University. Of the ability displayed in this lecture I need not speak, but I may show its extent by quoting the programme of illustrations:—

Psalm 105: Tate and Brady (Tune, "Missionary"), as an example of the pompous bass solo for the parish clerk, followed by a puling duet for two lonely trebles; with a chorus joining in, with a false accent, of the old debased order of things.

Of Polytone and Monotone: from "The Merchant of Venice."

Tallis's Responses: 1. The Plain Song in Unison; 2. In Soprano, with harmonies below; 3. In Tenor, with harmonies above.*

Anabaptists' Chant ("Le Prophète"). Meyerbeer.

Portion of Te Deum. Tallis.

Two Gregorian Chants (Psalms 93 and 30).

"No tocaran companas" (Spanish song and chorus, with Gregorian phrase and responses).

"God save the King" (Coronation Anthem). Handel.

"Let all men praise the Lord" ("Hymn of Praise"). Mendelssohn.

* He speaks of the practice of singing the upper part of 3, believing it to be *the* way, instancing: "and at the Savoy Chapel, they sing the treble parts only of Tallis's responses, the Plain-Song being omitted, like the part of Hamlet on a celebrated occasion. But this mistake is committed *everywhere*."—Page 414 of Report.

"Sleepers, wake!" ("St. Paul"). Mendelssohn.
Duet, "Zion spreadeth her hands" ("Elijah"). Mendelssohn.
[The chorus sings an old chant, supposed to be the earliest music extant to the "Sursum corda."]
"Kiss the Son, lest He be angry" (Anthem). Mendelssohn.
Chorus, "Requiem eternam," and Solo Chant, "Te Decet Hymnus" ("Requiem"). Mozart.
Three Hymn Tunes.
Portion of Creed. Gibbons.
Gloria Patri (Canon 4 in 2). Travers.
Portion of Magnificat. Aldrich.
Anthem, "O where shall wisdom be found?" Boyce.
Recitative and Chorus, "And I heard." Dr. John Blow.
Motett, "Blessing and glory" (I suppose wrongly ascribed to J. S. Bach).

The paper contains some remarks in defence of Gregorian chants: "In the Psalter and Canticles, the Gregorian chants seem to me the best; but any good single Anglican chant of moderate compass will answer remarkably well: sung, *of course, in unison* by the mass of the people: and if there be a choir, they can be set to sing the harmonies."

At the Church Congress at Liverpool, 1869, there was no strictly musical paper, though, in the course of the discussion on "The Capabilities of our Cathedrals" and the "Improvement of the Church Services," speeches were made containing many incidental sentences of interest to church musicians.

At the meeting at Southampton, in 1870, there was no musical paper.

Of the proceedings at Nottingham, in 1871, I have not been able to see a report.

In 1872, at Leeds, the Rev. Sir F. A. Gore Ouseley was again the chief speaker, taking for illustration:—

The Psalm-Chant, &c.
The Service: Gloria Patri from the Jubilate. Croft.
The Anthem: "Call to remembrance." Farrant.
"Hosanna." O. Gibbons.
"Teach me, O Lord." Rogers.
"O God, Thou art my God." Purcell.
"Wherewithal shall a young man." Boyce.
"Praise the Lord." Goss.

In a short section on "Hymns," he instances "La Suissesse au bord du lac," sung to an English hymn in a crowded church in London: "How can such tunes—in 6-8 time, in tripping measure, in secular style, with associations of secular and even amorous and questionable words—how can such tunes conduce

to devotion? How can they enhance the perfection of sacred art? How can they fail to degrade that which they seek to exalt? How can they result in aught but the disgust and discouragement of all musical churchmen, the misleading of the unlearned, the abasement of sacred song, the falsification of public taste, and (last, but not least) the dishonour of God and His worship?"

Dr. Stainer also read a paper, in which he "arranged church music under different styles, regardless of date, into the following classes: 1. A plain accompaniment of a given melody, called 'simple harmonic'; 2. The contrapuntal; 3. The dramatic. A large number of compositions consist of a combination of all these styles, which may perhaps form a fourth class—say 'composite.'"

Dr. Spark, the Rev. J. H. Sheppard, of Thurnscoe, and the Rev. J. R. Lunn, of Marton-cum-Grafton, and others also spoke.

In 1873, at Bath, a paper had been promised by Sir Herbert Oakeley, but, failing through a serious accident at the last moment, his place was supplied by Mr. Barnby, who read an interesting expression of his views as to the existing state of church music, "pointing out in what respect the service may be thought to have fallen short of the high aim it is intended to fulfil, and indicating the means by which a greater completeness of result may be obtained." He divided the service into "two great classes—the congregational or parochial, and the cathedral or meditative." Of the former he says: "It will, I think, be conceded that the congregational services of our Anglican Church were based on the principle that every one in the assembly has a right—nay, even an obligation—to take a part in the service, beyond that of a silent auditor. I do not think," he goes on, "that the introduction and development of music in the service was ever intended to do away with this right. But this principle involves, to my thinking, a second, namely, that of singing in unison, inasmuch as this is the only form which admits of a whole congregation joining without a violation of the laws of harmony. Among other advantages connected with the unison system is the opportunity offered for utilising fine voices and correct ears where there is no technical knowledge of music."

He goes on to lament the want "of a better and more efficient class of choirmasters than we have yet seen. We want men, not only of musical, but of intellectual cultivation, capable of explaining clearly and fully to their choirs and congregations the scope and context of every composition they undertake." He contrasts the large number of efficient executive organists, and the very limited supply of efficient choirmasters. In many churches the zealous clergyman and congregation expend much strength on the desirable object of procuring a fine

professional choir. "Would it not be a better investment of energy and money to seek out and adequately remunerate a really thoughtful and efficient choirmaster?"

On the second (the cathedral or contemplative service), he protests alike against the ultra-conservative spirit of antiquarianism which insists on keeping everything old simply because *it is old*, and the startling tendency to innovation in the easy admission of new compositions because they are new. And he cites a sentence from the Preface to our Prayer Book, condemnatory of both. He also protests in energetic terms on "the appointment to musical offices in cathedrals of candidates unable to properly fulfil their duties, either as lay clerk, choirmaster, organist, lay vicar, or precentor."

At the Brighton meeting, in October, 1874, two separate occasions were given for the discussion of musical questions, in a paper read on the Tuesday evening by Sir F. A. Gore Ouseley, on "The Management and Training of Parochial Choirs, and the Organisation of Diocesan Choral Festivals"; and in another, on the "Progressive Character of Church Music," on the Friday, by Dr. Stainer. Sir F. Ouseley commences with a sentence or two I will transcribe: "It is difficult in these days to realise fully the ordinary state of our country choirs a century ago. And yet unless we do so we shall be unable duly to appreciate the vast improvement which has taken place in them in our own days. Forty years ago this process was already going on, and people then drew very favourable comparisons between the church music of that date and the church music of half-a-century sooner. By recalling our own early recollections, then, and regarding them as an advance upon the ruder and more imperfect attempts in our grandfathers' days, we shall be able, perhaps, to conjure up a tone-picture of the fearful chaos of hideous sounds which was accepted in those days as sufficiently tuneful for the service of the sanctuary." He then draws a picture of the improved state of things, with the larger use of organs or harmoniums, the institution of the chancel choir, as against that of the west gallery, and the formation of diocesan choral festivals, as to which he recommends a different arrangement in successive years. One year, small country gatherings; the next year, district choral meetings; and the third year, one large central festival in the cathedral church. (These recommendations have since, I believe, been pretty generally accepted.) Many details are discussed, which it is not necessary to allude to.

Dr. Stainer's paper was in great part historical, largely seasoned by the originality of treatment we should expect from him. The programme sung by the choir was as follows:—

"Laudate nomen Domini." Dr. Tye.
"O bone Jesu." Palestrina.

"Tu es Sacerdos." Leonardo Leo.
"Ave verum." Mozart.
Hymn, "Holy, holy, holy." Crotch.
"O Saviour of the world." Goss.
"Jesu, our Lord." Gounod.
"We have heard."* Sullivan.

In the year 1875 the meeting at Stoke-on-Trent discussed a paper by the Rev. John Ellerton, on "Hymnody," and another on the same subject full of most interesting and instructive details "On Performance of the more simple kinds of Church Music," by Mr. E. J. Hopkins.

At Plymouth, in 1876, there was no musical paper. The same at Croydon in the year following, and at Sheffield in 1878.

At Swansea, in 1879, there was more than one meeting in which church music had mention: at the first of which "Hymns and Hymn-Books" was the subject, and at the second the Rev. Thomas Helmore advocated the "Special claims of the Ancient Plain-Song," in continuation of his previous paper at Wolverhampton. There was an interesting paper by the Rev. William Pulling, rector of Eastnor, Ledbury, and chaplain to Earl Somers, giving details of the origin and aims of "Hymns Ancient and Modern."

At Leicester, in 1880, there was no paper on church music.

A review of what has been said at the several meetings of Church Congress from 1861 to the present time amounts to this: that on several occasions on which choirs were provided for "illustrations" the meeting was regarded in the light of an entertaining contrast to the heavier task of other discussions—a little bit of a lecture, and a little bit of a concert. Sometimes the music sung exhibited no great research, and might have been often heard in the cathedral in the course of the year; the subject was conveniently treated "historically," and the illustrations were a refreshment. At other times music from the congregational point of view—chanting, hymn singing, and the writing of hymns, with the formation and management of choirs, or of choral associations—has been similarly brought under notice, until, one would think, everything has been said over and over again, till there can be nothing left to discuss. In 1876, 1877, 1878, and 1880 no attempt at all was made, as if there was a general conviction of this kind. This year (1881) for the first time a difference of proceeding was adopted, and instead of the speakers being left to themselves for a subject, the following was given: "The Modes in which Religious Life and Thought may be influenced by Art," *i. e.* by

* Founded to a great extent on one of the Gregorian Tones: "I have selected it to show how great and impressive their influence is, even when handled with all the freedom of treatment which the nineteenth century teaches."

architecture, music, and painting. Mr. Bodley was asked to speak on the first, Mr. Gambier Parry on the third, while the second fell to me. I think I shall bring the proposal on which I am desirous of asking your opinion more clearly before you, if I may be allowed to quote some paragraphs from my paper, on this occasion.

There are two methods in which church music acts on the religious life and thought: in the production of the *material*, or in church composition; and in the treatment of that material in its performance.

To the former of these I shall presently ask attention as infinitely the more important; but it is desirable to say something on the latter, for to many its interest is stronger and more constant. Be the material (the composition) ever so fine, its application to the religious life of the day is dependent on its exhibition in performance from time to time on living agency. The day is past, we may hope, when a suspicion attached to this word "performance." It is impossible for church music to exist without due care and preparation, and what has been thus prepared culminates in performance. The word has a lower and a higher meaning, and we use it in the latter.

Treating, then, the performance of church music as an element of religious culture, can anything be said likely to afford improvement of the systems of the present, or to point to an advance in the future?

If the papers read before the Church Congresses of past years testify to any one thing more than another, it is to the great progress already made in church music; and we see here, as in so many other movements for good, that the impetus has come from *below*. At Wolverhampton, in 1867, Sir F. A. Gore Ouseley spoke *specially* of the great improvement in *rural choirs:* "I think it may be asserted, without fear of contradiction, that the zeal and energy of the clergy in promoting the development of choral resources in their churches is, after all, the *mainspring* of all the great musical Church revival to which I refer." We owe a great debt of gratitude to those who have had the work of training the choirs of the country associations. There are, however, some points in their past history which suggest something for the future. In the first place, *all* the choirs of the district do not join, and every fresh year an opportunity *not* to join is given in the very words of invitation. In every little village, it has to be freshly decided, "Yes" or "No." Of course, if the answer is "No," there is no *choirmaster* for that year, so that the training is intermittent, and may be interrupted for a year or more, and, in the year it is accepted, is not more than sufficient for getting up the music incidental to the coming "meeting." Then, again, which are the choirs that say "No"? I greatly suspect, the *best* on the one side, or the *worst* on the other. We want some machinery,

then, which will unite *all*, and that constantly, and so keep the choirmaster at work, not for the festival of the year specially, but permanently, for the improvement of the choirs under his care.

But there is another point. The choirs now forming the District Association are, for the most part, the strictly *rural* choirs. They, perhaps, have their meeting in a grand town church; but I think the choirs of *these* churches do not join! The work of the Association does not commend itself to them; they think they are beyond it, and are perhaps right. We will come back to them presently; but I have just another word to say about music in the villages.

It would seem, I dare say, very difficult to many a good priest directing his own little choir, weak and shaky, because mainly composed of boys and a few adults, more women than men, to realise that this may be in any sense grand and noble. But there is one way which will do much more towards it than any one who has not given it a *fair* trial would think. You have a man or two, tenor or bass, not possessed of much voice or *well* able to hold his own against the three other parts of the harmony. Persuade them, in the whole service, to sing the melody in octaves.

Some time ago I was present at St. Paul's Cathedral on one of those occasions on which the choir is very fine and powerful, and the church full to overflowing. For lack of a better place I stood against the west door. As long as the chant was in *harmony*, the total of its effect might have been summed up in the conviction "that *music* was going on." But the Gloria Patri was in unison; in a moment everything was changed; it was like a sudden broad bright ray of sunlight in the midst of darkness. The whole atmosphere seemed full of tone, broad and massive, of glorious fulness, while every word, for the first time, was heard distinctly. The same lesson is taught once or twice a year, at the Festivals of the Gregorian Association. To the lover of well-balanced vocal harmony there is no doubt a certain rudeness in this octave singing, perhaps associated in the mind with the well-known fault in harmony called "consecutive octaves"; but there are many ways of showing how noble and satisfying the octave really is. Professor Hullah said years ago, "We shall never have congregational music till the *men* of a congregation sing"; true, if you can only get them to sing the melody in unison, you are half-way to as noble an expression of church music as one need hope or wish for.

A few weeks since I was the guest of an old friend in his country parish, for a Sunday. It was wet, and a small congregation and still smaller choir was the result. A boy or two and one man would, in many similar parishes, form the choir. But this gentleman had five sons—one of them a

tenor, the others more or less bass or baritone, but with good healthy lungs, and no *mauvaise honte*. The service, sung throughout in unison, with no conscious effort or pretension, and supported by the tones of a small and bad harmonium only, was, like the other instance mentioned and in a far different *locale*, as a reply to our question of to-night, well-nigh perfect. I cannot drive this lesson too strongly, nor too heartily recommend a broad unison service in village churches. In the hymn (the "anthem" of the Office), one or two verses may be sung in harmony for pleasure's sake.

But what shall be said of the town churches, and of the excellent choirs often to be found in them? The change which some of us can remember must be quite as great here as in the quiet country. How many of these churches had choirs thirty years ago? In London, at that time, you might certainly have counted them on the fingers of your two hands (of course, excluding St. Paul's, Westminster Abbey, the Royal Chapels, the Temple, and Lincoln's Inn). *Now*, a London church might almost as well shut its doors as expect to go on without one. But such choirs do not join the District Association, as a rule. Is there not room for a "fresh departure" here? Let me suggest it, not in the direction of the country choirs, but in that of the cathedral. Now in many of our cathedral towns a special choir has been got together for Sunday evenings and other special occasions. To this one would wish the greatest possible success, which indeed it generally achieves. But this is not what I wish to advocate. I want frequent association of the town choirs of a diocese generally with the cathedral choir—in fact, two choral associations, the higher of which should include the cathedral choir as its nucleus and the cultivated town choirs as its great body, kept distinct from the Association of Village Choirs. It should go on all the year, meeting constantly at convenient intervals, and frequently for service in the cathedral. Sometimes the service might be held on a Church festival like Ascension, when a grand service at the mother church might both teach the lesson and assist in observing the day. At other seasons, a day near the great feast may be chosen (after it, not before), say December 26 (St. Stephen) or 27; perhaps the evening of Shrove Tuesday; Easter Monday or Tuesday; Whit Monday or Tuesday; Trinity Monday; St. Michael and All Angels—All Saints' Day; and some day in the middle of the Trinity season, as might be convenient. By this succession of services *throughout the year* the joint action of mother and daughter churches may be maintained in perpetuity, and at frequent intervals. The idea, of course, includes *practice*, united and constant, which should be directed by the cathedral organist and choirmaster personally, or some other musician able to command

entire and willing obedience. If I suggest a large amount of work for this officer, outside his present sphere of duty, you will not think the scheme complete unless I add that it should be properly paid for.

One cannot arrive at this point, and escape the general question of cathedral work and cathedral pay. I cannot be wrong in asserting that the former suffers from the frequent meagreness of the latter. Some of our cathedral lay-clerks are shamefully underpaid; so that the addition of some other calling is absolutely necessary to existence, while any provision for old age is impossible. Out of a dozen choirmen, eight or ten may outlive the vigour of their voices many years. No wonder, then, if the cathedral services suffer. Some of the choirs are half-full of voices which should have been renewed years ago, but it would be cruelly unjust to compel retirement. Here, as elsewhere, the action of the Cathedral Commission has fatally crippled the chapters. To quote Mr. Beresford Hope, addressing the Congress at Norwich in 1865: "The cathedrals had fallen asleep, and were rocked to a rude waking by a panic-struck commission, whose leading idea seems to have been to increase their usefulness by cutting off the supplies which allowed them to be useful."

We see clearly enough what a fatal error this was. In every cathedral of the land the *public voice* now cries out for increased power and efficiency, but the means have been taken away. The laity demand more and younger choirmen, but the chapter can do nothing. Till their old members are laid to rest, they must be sustained and allowed to sing, for there is no chance of their superannuation, nor can their numbers be increased. The money that should be forthcoming for this purpose has been directed to another channel. The same misfortune has befallen some of the minsters, now, as Mr. B. Hope said, "pluming themselves for their flight into Cathedral Dignity" (as Sherborne, Southwell, St. Albans), where there was formerly something like a provision for cathedral service, now cut down to an extent that it is absolutely impossible to perform the music set down to be sung.* A reference to the various papers to be found in your own Reports will exhibit dignitary after dignitary lamenting the inability of the authorities to move. Thus, the Dean of Chester, speaking in 1869 of the Choristers' School there, says, "I wish we had funds to do more"; and an application to the Commissioners the year before had brought the reply, "We are powerless." They seem to have tied up the hands of everybody else, and finished by tying themselves up.

* Reference is particularly made to Southwell, where from a choir of three voices on each side (A.T.B.) the Commission suppressed the alto from one side and the tenor from the other! The Antiphonal Service was, of course, at an end.

I need not expatiate on the importance of this part of the subject. We *all*, I think, agree upon it. But it has so much bearing on the subject of to-night that I cannot forbear quoting two *great authorities*, whose opinions you will appreciate *ex animo*.

The first is the revered Bishop Hamilton, at the time Precentor of Salisbury, and afterwards, as Bishop, Precentor of the Province of Canterbury, who, in his answer to the Cathedral Commissioners, says: "The giving of greater musical power to the choir of the cathedral seems to me so essential to the realising the primary object of our foundation, that I could even strongly recommend that one of the four existing canonries should be suppressed, and its share of the corporate property appropriated to the improvement of the stipends of the present lay vicars, and the increase of their numbers, if funds cannot be obtained for this object without such a sacrifice." (Quoted by Mr. Street, at Liverpool, 1869.)

The second comes even nearer home, for he is no other than the living Bishop of Carlisle, present on this very occasion. Speaking in 1865 at Norwich, as Dean of Ely, he says: "The cathedral ought to be the music-school of the churches in the diocese. It seems to me unspeakably important that the service in the cathedral should be of the highest order of chastened beauty; of course, also, all the accessories of worship, and especially the behaviour and character of all who take part in it, should be, as nearly as possible, faultless. But the point upon which I wish just now to lay chief stress is the music. I would have the service elaborate and erudite, not necessarily florid, to an extent which would be inadmissible in parish churches, because this is necessary in order to stimulate both composers, teachers and singers of church music, and still more because the music of the cathedral, if really cared for and worked at conscientiously by the cathedral body, will have a reflected influence of considerable magnitude and importance upon the music of the parishes. Music in churches, and the preaching of the Gospel in churches, are not matters to be set upon the same level; but having reference to the constitution of human nature, and the necessity of making the dwellings of the Lord of Hosts 'amiable,' I think it difficult to overrate the importance of the cathedral service being regarded throughout the whole diocese as the very best that the diocese has in its power to offer to God. It would be invidious to attempt to point to cathedrals in which this great opportunity of usefulness is improved, and to other cathedrals in which it is neglected; but my subject requires the remark, that in this department there is a great opportunity, which, without any change in the existing constitution of our cathedrals, may be turned to

great account for the benefit of the diocese and the Church at large."

But we must approach the consideration of the more important of the two methods by which music acts on religious life and thought: the production of the material—or Church composition. When the suggestion already made for the higher association of cultivated church choirs has been carried out, and they are at work together, another want, of which I have yet given no hint, will be created. It will be found that they want music of a character fitted for the use of large bodies of choristers, of a style large, lofty, sublime, and fitted to the recurring festivals of the Church's year.

There is in existence, it is true, a large and varied collection of English church music, in the volumes of Boyce, Arnold, Page, and others, some of which have every claim on attention, and which the formation of these permanent bodies will resuscitate. Much of the finest English cathedral music is now disused, from the weakness in numbers of the choirs. Much fine church music, worthy of perpetual preservation, has also been produced within our time; and we shall not "willingly let die" the writings of such living men as Ouseley, Stainer, Sullivan, Armes, Steggall, Hopkins, &c., or of such departed heroes as Goss, Attwood, Wesley, Croft, or Purcell. Intermingled in publication with these, however, is a large collection of compositions, designed for use by a choir more remarkable for the possession of one or two sweet voices than of a numerous and powerful chorus. I allude to music in which a sweet melody and an effeminate harmony are the staple; and which will certainly be found of little or no use to the proposed "higher choral associations." The church anthem of the length and pretension of Bach's "Blessing and Glory;" Mendelssohn's "Lauda Sion," Bennett's "Woman of Samaria," the "Chandos Anthems" of Handel, Stainer's "Daughter of Jairus," Armes' "St John the Divine," Caldicott's "Widow of Nain," is the Church composition of the future, in combination with settings of the Church's own canticles such as we have recently welcomed from like sources.

Such of these as we have already will, however, soon be exhausted, and there is a lack of compositions strictly adapted to the whole course of the ecclesiastical year. J. S. Bach wrote a great variety, of great beauty, but of a complexity and difficulty which will often be found embarrassing; moreover, the English of those that have been translated is hardly satisfactory, and has an exotic feeling which is uncomfortable and strained—the common lot of all translations. We should aim at possessing a great variety by our own countrymen to words direct from English Holy Scripture, or from the Prayer-Book Psalter.

Composition of this high aim requires encouragement on the part of the Church. In particular, distinct encouragement to high design in composition should be afforded to young men. I was this year chairman of a committee invited by the Royal Academy of Music to adjudicate the annual prize for composition called the Lucas Medal. Five compositions of considerable length, for chorus and orchestra (without solo voices) were sent in, any one of which I should have been proud to conduct. They exhibited a command of counterpoint, and a knowledge of choral and orchestral effect, of which the Academy may well be proud. In model, these are precisely what the Church wants; and there are scores of young men who can thus write, and in time would produce great works, and reflect honour on the Church of their fathers. But composition, like other arts, requires practice, and repeated opportunities of production. This can only be the lot of a young man if he has money to spend. To print such works is somewhat costly, and the musical publishers can hardly be expected to take the risk of it; nor can the youthful composer. Moreover, it is while he is still young and in the disability of poverty that the vein of composition should be kept flowing. Ideas are then fresh and spontaneous. A few years later, and the cares of life interfere; his facility becomes less: the golden time has passed, and with it the disposition to write.

Now the Church rejoices in the prosperity of many societies with objects more or less religious, taking up work which seemed to have been forgotten in her corporate capacity. I venture to put before you a new proposal for the formation of a society on a broad and national basis, having for its object the "encouragement of church music, and especially of church composition." I do not know what the incomes of the great Church Societies are: "The National Society," the "S. P. C. K.," the "Bible Society," &c. Would it be deemed absolute madness to prefigure the establishment of a society for the promotion of church music, with a spending income one-twentieth in amount of that lately spent by Government on the encouragement of singing in elementary schools, on a principle involving absolutely no return for the money? I venture to say that such a society, with a small practical directorate, would in twenty years do an enormous work for the Church. She has not yet lifted a finger, nor said one word towards this object. She has no musical agency whatever. Wonders have been done without it by individual energy, of which we now enjoy much fruit. Is it worth while to try what a little generosity and loving fellowship will do in this new direction?

An important advance has been made, of late years, as to which there are two things to be said: a word of praise, and

one of caution: I mean as to the employment of the orchestra in church. Churches of large area and great height are so peculiarly favourable to the effects of the orchestra that, as an encouragement of religious thought and feeling, *in church*, there is probably no musical agency within our control at all comparable to it. And some music of the great masters is so imbued with true Church feeling that one would never wish to listen to it anywhere else. If you wish to test this, hear Bach's sublime "Passion Music" at the Albert Hall, and then at St. Paul's. It is quite true that the home of the Oratorio proper is in the Church. It is to be noted, however, that many compositions with which we are familiar under the title "Oratorio" are thus misnamed. Some of Handel's, unless under great excision and censorship, are utterly unfit for such a purpose. But my word of caution is not as to these, but to the growing habit of getting together a so-called orchestra of anybody who will come, apparently with little regard to ability, to proportion, or to rehearsal, and setting them to accompany a small choir, in a church far too small for the purpose, in music with which neither choir nor orchestra have more than a very small acquaintance. I have known some dismal examples. Depend upon it, the orchestra is only to be introduced when it is of really good quality, in a church of ample dimensions, and under the control of a master. The House of God must not be made a "place of experiment."

Nor do I feel quite comfortable on the question of "Organ Recitals," to which there is, just now, a growing inclination. It may seem hard to raise the voice of objection. There is no one instrument so sublime in tone, and capable of such infinite variety, as the church organ; but it is because of its connection with the daily office of praise that one would desire to guard its use; just as one would guard the church itself, as a building, from use for *any* other object than the worship of God. At any rate, the feeling of this connection should be maintained on every public occasion, without exception. The organ should only be touched as an adjunct to this worship; and if, for the nonce, it be used as a solo instrument, it must be made to conduce to true religious thought by the unvaried solemnity of its utterances. The young player would be too apt to think of the brilliant and dramatic, in place of the appropriate. As we go on, it may be possible to inculcate this lesson in the training of young organists. I have known sad indications of the want of such feeling: as, for example, in a solemn musical celebration of the Holy Eucharist concluded by Mendelssohn's "Baal, we cry to thee," or a discourse on the duty of penitence grotesquely capped by a merry operatic overture. I am sorry to hear that our American cousins are rather given to this kind of impertinence. In large towns, the temptation to exceed will be less as the number of available

concert organs increases. As for anything like a concert in church, under guise of a church meeting, especially with payment for admission, it should not for a moment be admitted as *possible*, though I am sorry to think it is sometimes a fact.

I am tempted here to make a remark as to general everyday appropriateness of the music selected, to the *season of the Church's year*. I remember to have seen, in the service paper of one of our Midland cathedrals, one of the most penitential of the anthems of Tallis put down for use on Easter Monday ("I call and cry"). I should draw the line much more strictly than the mere exclusion of such a mistake as this. It is not sufficient that the general character of the music for a festival be in *harmony* with the day, it must be actually *pertinent* to it; and more than this, the music fitted for a certain time should be kept out of performance at any other. In this way the whole progress of the Church's year should be traceable in the music, and a favourite hymn or anthem should never be used *only* because it is a favourite. The want of this principle, I am sure, does harm to Church feeling; for example, when a favourite tune, like that by Dr. Dykes for the "Hymn for those at Sea," is used for anything and everything of a metre to fit it, its character goes for nothing. I know that the composer felt this as a downright injustice to his own musical knowledge and taste; but, alas! some of our foremost churches have led the way in this very misappropriation.

For a similar reason a Psalter should be used, and used fairly, in which chants of an appropriate character are fixed to each Psalm, and these should not be departed from. If one may modestly mention one's own efforts in wedding music to words, I may say that in "The Psalter with Chants Ancient and Modern," the treatment of one Psalm (say, *e.g.*, the 107th) was the result of many days' thought and labour. Yet a musical amateur will sometimes put aside such a result without a moment's hesitation.

And this reminds me that I must say one word more as to the selection of music for the District Choral Associations. This is important, because it usually lasts long in all the churches using the book. I must think that its selection by a musical committee—nine-tenths of whom disclaim musical knowledge—as at present, is not always or entirely satisfactory. There are instances of the attendance of certain choirs being dependent on the selection of some favourite tune suggested at committee. As a whole, I consider the music now put before the choirs much weaker than it need be for this or some such reason. Let us hope that the widespread technical knowledge of the art, which is now reaching all classes, may in time tell in this direction. It requires something more than

an ear for music to decide on matters of musical composition, or the admission of a new tune into the service. It is not the pretty tune that is the most fit, nor the most popular that is the most worthy of popularity. Some of the melodies of Moody and Sankey, or of the "Crown of Jesus" collection, are popular enough—but it is quite another question whether they are worthy of association with God's worship. Are they and the hymns they accompany not rather the exponents of a somewhat unwholesome and sentimental feeling, too personal and effeminate for public worship? I ask you to compare the Old 100th sung lustily by men, or "Now thank we all our God," "O sinner, lift the eye of faith," or some of the old Psalter tunes of the age of the Reformation, the Old 113th "From highest heaven the Eternal Son," or Handel's "Rejoice, the Lord is King" with such a hymn as "Safe in the arms of Jesus," sung in like manner, and to tell me what you think of the effect of the two on the religious mind? I believe that the two styles I mention produce very different effects as to reverence or irreverence (*i.e.*, familiarity), and a higher or lower conception of the great object of worship. Can familiarity with trifling adjuncts—the secular song adapted to sacred words, the opera chorus made into a hymn-tune—produce, think you, anything like the idea of worship?

But we want more musical education yet before people will be ready to accept the best. When contributions towards the musical edition of "Hymns Ancient and Modern" were invited, eighteen years ago, my house was full of the MSS. tendered for acceptance from all quarters, and the tune of which I received the greatest number of copies was an adaptation of a chorus in Weber's "Oberon." Judging from the pressure put upon us from without for more pretty and modern tunes when the last edition was in preparation, I should hardly say that the public taste had meanwhile improved. Yet the question of taste, I am sure, is a most important one, and in dealing in whole or in detail with the service of the sanctuary, we must never forget that it is not a question of what shall be pretty, "nice," and agreeable, but what is noble, lasting, and sublime. Why? The pretty, the agreeable, the popular, is the attribute of the man—earthy; the noble, the lasting, the sublime, is that of the worship of God.

I have troubled you with all this detailed account of Church Congresses (with which probably a large proportion of you never cared to meddle) with the ulterior object of pointing out that, after all, and in view of the very small amount of practical suggestion these twenty years have there produced, there is no *other* organisation in the Church which has all this time even touched it. Some will perhaps remember that Convocation has once or twice mentioned it; if I remember rightly, however, only on the question of an "Authorised Hymnal,"

and always with the declaration that the time has not come for interference by authority in that question.

Then there are several organised bodies of professing musicians, such as the College of Organists, Trinity College, each doing the work it has laid down for itself in its way and limitation; and there is the Royal Academy of Music, and the more modern "Training School for Music," labouring in the general cause of musical education. What I should like to see established is a society for the special encouragement of church composition *per se*, and that on a plan calculated to encourage the young. To musicians of my own age this should present itself as something like a *sacred duty;* and I think I can see the way to it. Of course we shall want money, but if we show a good case it need not be difficult to raise it.

To put a practical case, on the supposition that we have raised our first £100. I should propose to invite compositions of a certain length and aim, and under musical conditions to be expressed, to be sent (if a disagreeable word must be used) in friendly competition under the disguise of a motto; the undertaking to be that the cost of setting up the type and provision of stereotyped plates and the printing of a first edition would be defrayed for the composition accepted, the copyright being vested in the composer. This, I think, might be the first step, as bearing fruit in the most desirable form of encouragement to the young; but, if fortune favour the exchequer, it would be most grateful to the management of such a society (I am speaking hypothetically) to be able occasionally to commission a work from a well-known composer.

Lay such a work before a publisher, and he will tell you, with all the goodwill to say something kinder, that he is already overburdened with offered works, and that if he does purchase your copyright the MS. will probably remain unused for long years, till you and it are forgotten.

I have said how important it is to enable young men to produce compositions before they have got into the rut of daily lesson-giving: a rut from which it is painfully difficult to escape, once your chariot-wheels have sunk into it. It will occur to you how the lives of many now celebrated composers illustrate this. Take Mozart as an instance. Our own Sterndale Bennett was another striking example of the value of youthful inspiration. How charming the works of his youth, and how much more numerous than afterwards, when the unceasing toil of teaching became the routine of a second nature! For the youthful composer we may hope there is a better prospect opening, for there is a greater demand for works of the higher aim, because amateurs are better educated to appreciate and cultivate the higher works of art. A curious and welcome testimony to this fact accidentally caught my

eye the other day. I see that of the Organ Primer of Dr. Stainer there have been 20,000 copies sold; so that there must have been within the last two or three years as many persons studying the king of instruments. Who would have thought of this number?

I am particularly anxious that if such a society can really be formed, it should be in great proportion by those of our own profession. I now take the liberty of asking your advice upon it, and I must bring these remarks to an end by expressing my earnest hope that I may not be thought to have used the accidental opportunity put into my hands otherwise than worthily, in thus bringing a new proposition to receive your criticism. Outside the profession and among churchmen, as such, I have reason to think we should not lack sympathy. I have just mentioned the bare proposal as it stands before you to a few such, personally known to myself; and I am at liberty to mention as ready to give a general approval to my idea, without being bound to further details, the following, among others: The Bishops of Lichfield, Carlisle, Edinburgh, Dover, and Ely; the Deans of Manchester and Wells; the Archdeacons of Southwark (Cheetham) and Northumberland (Watkins); the Warden of St. Augustine's, Canon Barry, Rev. Professor McCaul, Sir F. Ouseley (Oxford), Sir Herbert Oakeley (Edinburgh), Sir Robert Stewart (Dublin), and Dr. Garrett.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN having invited discussion—

The Rev. T. HELMORE said: I will just say that I think we are all very much obliged to Mr. Monk for the paper he has read, and that he has given us so much to think about that there is not time to consider it. If it were possible to have an adjourned meeting, and then talk over these things, I think a great deal might be said which would be most *à propos*. As to the formation of this society which he wishes, of course the design is most excellent, but I see very great difficulties in the way. With regard to the giving of prizes, allow me to say, as a member of the old Madrigal Society, we have lately set a good example in that way, a gentleman having come forward and given a good round sum of money, which is invested for the purpose of giving a prize every year for the composition of madrigals. If this association were to endeavour to do something of the same kind, and some of our rich friends were to give us a similar donation, we, the Musical Association, might give some prize of this kind for Church music. I do not like

to detain the meeting with many remarks at the present time, as there are so many points in the paper, but with regard to one subject perhaps I may say a word. In my experience I have heard a good deal of congregational singing in harmony which was very fine indeed—for instance, I have heard the popular mass at Cologne Cathedral, where a great number of people were singing, and singing in parts. I conceive, if the music is well known, and the harmony is properly printed and circulated amongst the musical population, singing in harmony in congregations ought to be no great difficulty. I may say, as far as personal enjoyment in the worship of God is concerned, in sacred song it is more pleasant to many people to sing in harmony than in unison. Singing in unison is a very fatiguing thing, I find myself, although you would suppose I would rather have taken the other tone, from the circumstance that I have done a good deal for Gregorian music, which is generally sung in unison. I remember some years ago that most excellent man, Canon Melville, had a large congregation of educated people, and they sang in harmony very delightfully; and at Bradford, and other places in the north of England, I have heard congregations sing in harmony very fairly; so that I think it is just as well for us not to suppose it is necessary to have unison singing in order to have good congregational singing. At the same time I quite agree that there are circumstances and occasions when singing in unison is very much finer, and in large congregations, such as in a cathedral, there is no doubt the words are much more distinctly heard at the bottom of the cathedral when sung in unison than when sung in parts. At the same time, in small bodies, my own feeling is that harmony is more effective than unison. If you can get a large body of unison, it is very fine; but if there are but a few, harmony is better. I would also remark this, that the directors of music do not appear to me to make the most of their materials. If they would only take care to have the music arranged for the kind of voices at their command, they would have a much better effect than they sometimes produce. Another thing, with regard to the suppression of the poor altos, I must say I think a great deal might be done in the way of training up both female voices and boys' voices as contraltos. We only select choirboys as trebles, but there are just as many boys who have a compass from fiddle G up to D on the fourth line who might sing a second part which would be very effective. I tried that some years ago, at St. Barnabas', and the effect was very good. I set about half the boys to sing second trebles. I also heard it in Germany, where the St. Cecilia Choir met at Ratisbon. In conclusion, I should like to propose a vote of thanks to Mr. Monk for his very interesting paper.

Mr. W. H. CUMMINGS seconded the motion, and suggested that the discussion should be adjourned.

[The question was put to the vote by the Chairman, when it was determined to continue it.]

Mr. W. H. CUMMINGS said: I feel very strongly that we are much indebted to Professor Monk, but at the same time the whole question turns, I think, on that of education. In the first place, for instance, our clergy need to be educated musically. It is quite clear that every privilege has its duty, and the exercise of a privilege without the accompanying duty becomes really tyranny. As the clergy chiefly have the management of music in churches and cathedrals, if they know nothing about the subject how is it possible they can exercise their privilege properly? It is impossible. Then I pass from that for a moment to speak about unison singing. Speaking of the feeling of choirs, I know that unison singing is irksome; and, curiously enough, the less education they have had the less they like unison singing; but I protest against it also as a musician. If I heard Dr. Stainer accompany unison singing it would be very good; but it is my misfortune sometimes to go to a church where there is a clever organist who is fond of unison singing to show off his want of skill, and the harmonies he manages to produce are so horrible that were I not a good churchman I should be much inclined to run out of the place. I think, therefore, unison singing is very full of danger; it is really a trap for the organist, and the younger and more enthusiastic he is, the more likely he is to fall into the trap. Here education and good art would help him. I remember an instance of a very clever organist, who perhaps is not quite so devotionally disposed as he might be, who told me that he rejoiced in unison singing because it enabled him to introduce such a lot of harmonies from Gounod's "Faust," particularly in the creed. Now I maintain that such a man ought not to be permitted to fall into such a trap. It would be a great advantage if he had no unison singing and was compelled to play exactly the music set before him. For my own part I do not think it is absolutely necessary in parochial churches to have unison singing. Clearly it is the duty of the people to learn how to sing, and if the clergyman were to tell them, "I have qualified myself for my office by studying music. You come here to take part in the music, as it is your duty to do in church; why do not you study to acquire some knowledge of music, so that you may be able to take your own part properly?" We should find the result perfectly good. Even if it were not so, and there were some who sang in unison, every musician knows that the rule against consecutive octaves does not apply in melody: it does not matter how much it is doubled; it does not hurt you at all when the harmony is

going at the same time. Therefore I feel, in parochial churches especially, harmonious singing is far preferable to unison. In a cathedral, as at St. Paul's, it is another matter, but the instance given just now by Professor Monk is weak. He spoke of the words having become so distinct immediately; but, if you remember, the words were the Gloria Patri, which, if a musician or a churchman did not know, even if it were sung in Latin, Greek, or Hebrew, it would be very wonderful; so that I think it was not so much from the distinct enunciation as from the fact of its being that which all must know from their earliest childhood. The example would have been more pertinent if it had been in the middle of some psalm with which he was not familiar: no doubt in Mr. Monk's case it would be very difficult to find one, but to an outsider that would be a better test. Still, the cases of St. Paul's and a parochial church are quite different. For my own part, I strongly advocate harmonious singing. I like Mr. Monk's idea of establishing a society for church music, but I do not think it would come within the province of this Society. The thing is far too large, but I feel it would be a very grand thing to do. For myself, personally, I thank him very much for the suggestion. I believe it is the only thing that can be done to raise up a race of church composers. I believe in the past the church composers have not been so numerous as they might have been, because there was so little encouragement; and there again the fault has always been that the clergy, the deans and chapters, have offered no encouragement. When Wesley's and Purcell's works were published by subscription, I believe there were not more than six cathedrals which subscribed for them. It is within my own knowledge that in one cathedral, a daughter of one of the canons having written a most miserably wretched anthem, it was foisted into the service three or four times a month; and an excellent man, a precentor, used to horrify me by having "The Frog's Galliard" performed to some sacred words. That kind of thing to the feelings of an earnest churchman and musician is horrible. If the heads of the establishment do these things, how can you look for better from those who are supposed to be subordinate? This proposal for a church musical society on a good, grand basis would receive support probably from the clergy generally, even those who know little about music, but whose hearts are in the right place, and desire to have things put on a proper footing; and I am sure it would receive the earnest support of professional musicians who have the good of religion and the service of the Church of England at heart.

Mr. R. Hopper.—There is one point which has not been noticed, which is, I think, the most important of all. I am an old organist, and I can always get congregational singing

by one means, and that is by playing slowly. I think the present rate of playing hymn-tunes is really fatal to good church music. I was organist for some time at Stepney, where there is a very poor congregation, but there every Sunday the church was filled with sound, and the effect was magnificent. I should like to have some other opinion on that subject, but my own is that such rapid singing is fatal to a good effect. I speak from personal experience, and I have again and again attempted to introduce slower singing, but the clergy have objected to it and stopped it.

Major CRAWFORD.—I should like to make two or three remarks upon the question of unison singing, without going into the question of unison *versus* harmony, in which I should, perhaps, agree with Mr. Cummings. I would point out that a very large number of the original tunes produced at the time of the Reformation were written as melodies without harmonies. Most of the early German chorales were written simply as melodies, and all the tunes used by the Reformed Church from the time of Calvin were of that character; and in that Church, down to the present day, when harmonies were introduced, the melody alone was permitted to be sung. Harmony was never on a single occasion used in the Reformed churches. All the harmonised versions produced by Bourgeois, Goudimel, and others were simply for private use, and though it was tried on several occasions to introduce them into the churches, this was never permitted. Calvin was strongly opposed to it, and incurred a good deal of obloquy from musicians on that account. He had however some reason on his side, because he was afraid of what was then called "curious music," and I dare say Mr. Helmore knows what that was. He wanted to prevent that, and therefore confined the Church strictly to unison singing. Those two well-known tunes of which Professor Monk has spoken, the Old 113th and the Old 100th, were both from the Genevan Psalter, and written in unison only. They were afterwards introduced into England and harmonised.

Mr. DE PONTIGNY.—Was it left to the organists to harmonise them in different ways as they pleased?

Major CRAWFORD.—They had no organs for some time. With regard to singing without organs, the most effective singing I ever heard was in the Greek Church. I heard a very fine service when I was in the Russian dominions, and the effect was magnificent. There was no organ, and no instrument of any kind. The whole service, from beginning to end, was unaccompanied, but they never lost the pitch.

The Rev. T. HELMORE.—Was it in unison?

Major CRAWFORD.—No, in harmony. The voices, too, were magnificent, both the men's and the boys'. With regard to unison-singing there is one great difficulty, that you have

voices of different kinds—basses, tenors, trebles, and altos, all to sing in unison. You must contract your compass very considerably, and the result is, you will find that the greater number of these old tunes are written within a narrow range. If you go to the range which ordinary tunes are written in, you take the basses up goodness knows where, and the other voices down—and, in fact, it cannot be done. Therefore you restrict your limit of melody very considerably, and you exclude a great number of popular favourites among modern tunes. They could not be sung in unison. They are either too high for some or too low for others.

Mr. W. H. Cummings.—Major Crawford has given an example of what was used in the early Reformed Church of Switzerland, but that is not the case now. They now sing in harmony.

Major Crawford.—It is only within the last fifty years.

Mr. W. H. Cummings.—I am only speaking from my own experience. Now they have harmony and organs. I have some early tunes printed in the sixteenth century, in four parts, and printed in Switzerland or France, or in England. The fact that the melody was put in the tenor would rather seem to imply that the harmonies were intended to be sung by the choir, and the majority would only sing the melody, and that would stand out, which seems to have been a very good, wholesome arrangement, the descant being sung by some members of the choir. They presumed the melody would be sung by the mass of the people, who had tenor or soprano voices, and, therefore, put it in the tenor part with the harmonies above it.

Major Crawford.—As a matter of fact, until the last few years harmony was strictly forbidden in Switzerland. It was contrary to church law.

Mr. Higgs.—It seems to me we are dealing very much with a question which is outside the main part of Mr. Monk's paper, although it is exceedingly interesting, namely, the comparison of unison and harmony singing; still, if I followed the paper rightly, Mr. Monk simply recommended singing in unison for village or rural churches, and I think we are judging of the matter rather from town experience. I must say it seems to me a most unnatural proceeding, where there is the capacity to sing in harmony, to put bass voices, for example, at their worst, and ask them to sing in unison or octave with tenors or trebles. Evidently, in endeavouring to sing with the other voices, they *would* be to a certain extent at their worst. There would be some gain in rural districts, in that it would necessarily be only very simple music which they would attempt to sing in unison; but I think it would be a very serious and retrograde step to go back from the marked improvement which we can remember has taken place in town

churches. I must thank Mr. Monk for giving us his paper, and say how sincerely I hope the main scheme of his paper will bear fruit; I mean that plan for the formation of a society for the encouragement of church music.

Dr. GLADSTONE.—May I say one word about the alto voices alluded to by Mr. Helmore? It was stated by Mr. Cummings that the use of boy altos was peculiar to Norwich Cathedral. It is true that only boy alto voices were used when I first went there, some years ago, but the system was found to be most unsatisfactory in every way. The boys can only sing mostly on the worst and coarsest part of their voices, and their voices do not blend with the others at all in part-singing. Therefore it was found most unsatisfactory, and the result was that, to the first vacancy that occurred while I was there in the staff of lay clerks, a man alto was appointed. I find now they are advertising for a second, and I have not the least doubt that a custom which has been found to work so very badly will die out.

Mr. DE PONTIGNY.—Could a boy alto become a man alto?

Dr. GLADSTONE.—Their voices break like the others, of course. It seems to me that the adult alto voice is unsatisfactory for want of encouragement—so few men are encouraged to use that voice. Most boys, as soon as they are able to sing, after losing their treble voice, begin to sing bass or tenor; and I cannot help thinking that if in cathedrals boys were encouraged, when their voices break, as soon as they begin to form again, to use the head voice, and prospects were held out to them if they did so that they might find work in the cathedral eventually, these voices might be greatly improved. I found it in one remarkable instance to work well with two boys in a choir I was connected with. They had been propping up the soprano part for some time, and were screaming up to F and G long after their voices were broken: I found when I went to the choir they both possessed uncommonly good head voices, and naturally I turned them into altos, and very good altos they both made. It seems to me that, if they were encouraged to use the head voice, many more altos would be produced than we have at present.

Mr. W. H. CUMMINGS.—I do not remember Dr. Buck's choir at Norwich, but they had boy altos for something like thirty years, and Dr. Buck's had the reputation of being the best English cathedral for music; whether it was so or not I cannot say. I will point out another instance of a male alto: John Barnett, the composer of "The Mountain Sylph," made his first appearance on the stage of Drury Lane as an alto boy, singing the celebrated "Blow, gentle gales," in which the alto part was very important. That was his first appearance as a musician, and he made his reputation as an alto boy. I am not an advocate of the use of alto boys, but speak merely as matter of convenience. As an old cathedral boy myself, I

know that our cathedral music needs male altos, and if we do not have male altos the English school of glee-writing must die out; therefore I should be very glad to see male altos encouraged.

The Rev. MARMADUKE BROWN.—I think where there are boy altos used in choirs it is usually because they cannot pay men: they use the inferior article when they cannot get the superior. If boy altos are to be used, it will be necessary to give special training to the alto boys' voices; not attempt to train them in the same way as the others, but try to give them more tone.

The Rev. T. HELMORE.—I must demur to the term "inferior voices." I think the true cultivation of the voice on sound natural principles would do away with male alto voices. I think you ought to substitute for alto voices the *tenore leggiero* of the Italians. If you have that, then it is good; but I do protest most fervently against the notion that boy contraltos are inferior to men altos.

The Rev. MARMADUKE BROWN.—I do not mean in that sense at all.

The Rev. T. HELMORE.—I object to the term "inferior article." If vocal music is to go on, we must not care about these altos in glees; glee-singing, although very pretty, is a far inferior kind of music if you take a wide view of the subject. If you want to have a really good voice, you must adopt the Italian mode of training and get rid of all falsetto.

The CHAIRMAN.—I think our friend Mr. Monk has been very much too kind to us, for amongst the things we are invited to discuss I find Church congresses, Gregorians and Anglicans, Church festivals, choir-singing, unison-singing, unison-singing at St. Paul's, the Government grant, orchestras in churches, prize anthems, the pace of hymns, and now we have got into a discussion on alto voices and boy singers. I will leave unsaid a great deal I should like to say if time had permitted, but I will for the few remaining minutes direct your attention to Mr. Monk's proposition for a society to encourage church music. I am not sure I am very much pleased with it. I have a good notion that the best men somehow manage to come to the front. I had always held the opinion of Mr. Monk until I was put in the position of an umpire with regard to compositions—that if you gave prizes an immense amount of hidden talent would turn up; but somehow or another it never does. I think Mr. Helmore will bear me out in this, that in the Madrigal Society, which offers a ten-guinea and a five-guinea prize, and takes the most liberal view of what a madrigal may be, yet one year we had to withdraw the ten-guinea prize. As to prize anthems, I do not know whether many of you are aware that many years ago Miss Hackett gave a prize for anthems, and a great many anthems were

written for it, but it seemed to me that the prize did not bring out the best class of art. People who send in for prizes do not write spontaneous music; it is like a man who is asked to write an exercise for his musical degree; he feels it is a horrible bore, pulls down a book of words, and sits down and writes what is absolutely dry and uninteresting as a rule. I am afraid the class of music called up would not be as satisfactory as Mr. Monk thinks. I am also afraid the association would inevitably tumble to pieces on account of its own differences of opinion. There are very strong and marked differences of opinion amongst church musicians as to what church music should be. I had once to examine for that Lucas Medal at the Academy, and I must say, as far as technical training went, the compositions sent in were very creditable indeed to the teachers. I should have liked to have given the prize to the composition showing some spark of new life and vigour in some form or another, not simply because it was highly respectable. I arranged them in my own pocket-book privately, according to what I thought the merit of the works; I could not be at the last meeting, and the result was I found that the anthem selected for a prize was one nowhere near my calculation at all. If you have that kind of association, it will have either fights amongst itself as to what ought to be good church music before giving the prize; or each side will make a compromise, which will mean that the thing shall be of no particular mark at all; or it will fall into the hands of one school, either the old school or the new school. If it should do that, I should be sorry to see the association formed; for the man who joins any association or gives anything to an association which pledges itself to a particular line of thought, whether in politics, religion, or art, practically when he sends his subscription is signing away his personal liberty. He has to go with a batch of people and vote as they do. I see many difficulties, and I do not see the amount of unrewarded and unfostered talent Professor Monk anticipates. I am sorry to say it, but I know it is so. We often hear people say, "We have such a talented composer in our district," but when his work is published and shown us, as a general rule it is disappointing. I think the great duty is most of all an educational duty. We seem to have gone mad on the subject of examinations. There are no end of examiners, and it seems to be thought that if we could send examiners to Timbuctoo it would make them good arithmeticians, good teachers, and good Christians. Then if people will not come to be examined in London we send a lot of first-class men down to the country, put them into a first-class carriage in the train, and they go round and knock at people's doors, and say, "What kind of a degree would you like to accept? I can make you licentiate of this or not—A. B. C. of this

college, or X. Y. Z. of the other." People get these diplomas, and say: "What a high state of education there is in our town! There are so many young ladies who are all A. B. C. of such a college." To my mind that is not education in any way. With regard to prizes I think it is pretty much the same. I think any money which can be got together should be used to enable some young fellow who showed a touch of invention as a church composer to go and open his eyes all over the world. Let him hear the psalm-tune at Cologne, which is quite enough to last one a lifetime; let him hear the church music in the Greek Church and in the Roman Church; and then let him come back to the simplest parish church in England, and he will be a better man for the post than if he had never gone away. I should be much rather inclined to support any such scheme for educating young church musicians than for this scheme of offering prizes. You cannot get music unless you teach musicians—at least, that is my experience in that direction. The number of petitions which come to me (because, I suppose, my address is so easily found out) is astonishing. These petitions speak of young people showing talent, and asking how they are to be trained. I only wish I knew of some good society that I could point out to them and say, "There is a board of examiners, and if the boy has talent there is £100 a year for seven years for his education." That would be a real benefit; but I am not very warm on Professor Monk's scheme, though I dare say he will have more to say about it than I can.

The vote of thanks having been carried unanimously—

Professor Monk said.—Accept my warm thanks for your kindness in listening to me so long, and the vote of thanks you have been kind enough to pass for my paper. Suffer me, as time is passing on, just to say a word on one or two of the points which have been mentioned. Mr. Helmore spoke of the grand service in Cologne in harmony, in which the people joined, and the chairman has also, I think, heard that. I only wish it could be heard in England.

The Chairman.—It is not altogether in harmony; it is the ten or eleven o'clock mass, the country people come in from all parts, stand down the nave, and sing. The Sanctus, the Agnus Dei, and Benedictus are ancient metrical versions which have been in use for a very long time, and in those cases the people do not sing the harmonies.

Professor Monk.—Perhaps the point which has been most adverted to, aside from my proposal, was that question about unison singing. I thought I had made it quite clear that I advocated *that* in a village church with a miserable little choir of a boy or two, a woman or two, and a man; and I said you had much better persuade the man to sing the melody than anything else. It really comes to that. I simply advocate it

where nothing better can be done. I would rather hear a solitary man or two help out with the congregational unison than make a bad harmony which they cannot sustain. I quite agree with Mr. Hopper as to the pace at which psalmody is often sung, and I am glad to express that opinion wherever I can. My prevailing sentiment with regard to the whole matter is this: I gave you an account of the twenty years' meetings of the Church Congress, the only place in which church music has been even mentioned. I say the result of it is that nothing has been done in fact. I want to do something. Nobody shall go before me in my desire to see both the public musically educated, and all those members of the profession who come into the service of the Church. I am continually and completely at a loss to find young people for organists who are also able to be choirmasters. With regard to alto boys, I beg to say I have a foundation for choristers at King's College, London, which is open to the election of alto boys, and I shall be very glad to hear of any at any time, but I do not find them come up very plentifully. I have it in my power to elect either a treble or a good second treble; but my experience of working that for more than twenty years is that second trebles seldom present themselves.

JANUARY 2, 1882.

THE REV. T. HELMORE, M.A.,

IN THE CHAIR.

SONGS AND SONG-WRITERS.

By EUSTACE J. BREAKSPEARE, Esq.

WISHING to economise time and space as much as possible, seeing that the materials of my paper offer a little difficulty in their proper selection and arrangement within the limits afforded me, I prefer, to any extended *preambulum*, briefly to make you acquainted with the exact line upon which I endeavour to approach the subject of "Songs and Song-Writers." As this is a theme which might be led up to from so many directions, your attention being otherwise taxed throughout much of the time to discover from which I set out, I will simply state that I propose treating the subject from what may be termed the musical-literary point of view—regarding the mutual bearing of music and poetry—strictly, be it understood, in the field of song-composition. I take the German lied in particular (for reasons which I will give) as a model, and in support of a theory I presume to put forward; next, I would consider the formal structure of songs—as affected by the style of the accompanying poetry; then, the words of songs considered separately; the translation of foreign songs; the question of art-songs in the concert-room: these, with one or two subsidiary matters, are the branches of the subject I undertake to deal with.

It would be affectation to profess independence, as it would be unpardonable to show ignorance of the work by August Reissmann on the subject of the German lied. Reissmann shows how the people's song—the simple and spontaneous outcome of untutored musical nature, on the one hand; and on the other the more learned style of vocal composition, based on the church contrapuntal system;—how these gradually approached in the "Volksthümlichen" style, wherein the popular element is preserved while the formal expression becomes more artistic. We not unfrequently meet with persons who assert that

the best and truest type of song is that which is the most direct and artless expression of the people,—while (so it is claimed) the genuine, naïve character of the folk's-song appeals more powerfully to the feelings than does any vocal composition fashioned by art. Reissmann, in correction of this opinion, shows that the simple "volkslied" can do little more than touch the *rough surface* of the sentiments it deals with. The artist, in his work, attempts at a nicer refinement of the material; he analyses the emotion in a more subtle degree; the technicalities of the work are better considered, so as to insure greater freedom and increased charm in the practical execution. The artist's feeling is in nowise different in its nature to that of the people, only it goes deeper, and he is more enlightened as to its nature and its origin. To sum up, Reissmann says the art-song may be viewed as "*an ennobled and perfected people's song*." Through the exertions of Adam Hiller, Schulz, and Himmel, we find the form and character of the lied defining itself. Then, following the grand poetic burst of the latter part of the eighteenth century (wherein Goethe took the splendid lead), we have a new line of composers who aim at more truthfully reflecting the spirit of the poem in their musical setting of the same. At the head of this list must undoubtedly be placed the name of Reichardt, who, Reissmann says, "was the first to strike the true lyrical ground-tone of the Goethian lyric." It is noteworthy that Reichardt was the first to place in the hands of the audience at his concerts *words* of the piece about to be sung. Hitherto, acquaintance with the words of a song might hardly be deemed essential to the appreciation or comprehension of the music itself. Zelter then follows with an advance in harmonic colouring, closer approach to the poetic idea, and a more consistent style. In connection with the composers Reichardt and Zelter are to be mentioned the names of Ludwig Berger and Bernhard Klein. Under the influence of the Italian school the "aria" style is developed; and, in the hands of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, Spohr, and Marschner, the German lied becomes adapted to what Reissmann terms a more "scenic canvas." But only in the songs of Schubert does the lied proper attain its full development. Into a dissertation upon the works of this greatest master of song-composition I cannot pretend to enter. While noting the gradual advance made by the Berlin school of writers just mentioned, and not forgetful of the fact that many composers have simply *grown*, so to speak, upon their predecessors, still we cannot but recognise the immense stride forward made by Schubert in the art of song-composition. We find the pre-Schubertian writers left with little but historic recollection; but the lines of song-composition as laid down by Schubert can run little risk ever of becoming obscured.

Schubert's compositions form the crown and culmination of all the efforts in song that had been made before him; and they constitute the classic model and criterion for all new attempts in the field of lyric composition. Just as the Goethian lyrics mark a new era in song-composition, so, again, the advent of Heine laid open a new field of poetry for the song-composer, of which Schumann seems to have taken the most complete advantage.* Reissmann is a great enthusiast for Schumann: he seems to think that in Schumann the lied style reaches its highest point of perfection, and this while the most deeply sympathetic musical exposition of the poetry is combined with the strictest adherence to formal principles. Like most enthusiasts, however, in his endeavour to present his ideal writer most favourably, he is, I think, a little unjust with respect to certain successors of Schumann—*Epigonen*, as he seems to consider them—among whom Robert Franz seems to be the chief one singled out for criticism. Though in many of Franz's songs the vocal part is as melodious as one could possibly desire it to be, still it is evident with Franz in general that purely melodic charm is not the first consideration. I think it was said by Gumbert—though I am mindful not to put forward a writer of this type as any great authority—that the vocal part should be interesting even if taken alone without the accompaniment; whereas, in Franz, the duty seems to devolve mostly upon the pianoforte part in its figuration, and most especially its harmonisation: the accompaniments are worked out in what Ambros terms "miniature-like fineness"; yet flowing naturally, it must be said,—not seeming at all the result of laborious reflection. Franz's great sin in Reissmann's eyes is his frequent departure from the recognised form of the lied. He complains also of the sequential structure of his melody, which approaches almost a mannerism. But when we turn away from the formal side of Franz's work, we cannot, I think, but admire the deep poetic conception and treatment of the words he undertakes to set. And to Franz I look for main illustration of my argument:—how with each new advance in the field of song-composition we find the tendency is to more closely enter into, and find musical expression for, the refinements and subtle distinctions of poetical thought and feeling. The broad musical style of the pre-Schubertian writers develops by degrees into the modern style, wherein *nuances* of poetical idea and subjective impressions are more delicately and minutely distinguished; and wherein, moreover, the individuality of the writer himself becomes more apparent in the work, adding thereby immeasurably to its interest. The composer's individuality, at

* Schubert (according to Reissmann) comprehended but the one side of Heine's poetical nature: the whole Heine (the ironical as well as the sentimental) it was reserved for Schumann to embrace.

times, it may be, imparts an emotional colouring to the work different to what we ourselves would have given it, or conceived it properly to admit of. You may look, perhaps, for an impassioned, voluptuous style given to the illustration of certain pieces, where instead, in Franz, the pervading sentiment may be that of a blissful, pious ecstasy. [Not but that in such songs as "Er ist gekommen durch Sturm und Regen" the emotion is as strong and impassioned as one could well look for.] It is simply that, in art, different natures may reflect very differently the same thing, and yet in equally truthful and sympathetic manner. In short, these songs of Franz can hardly be accounted, as Reissmann indeed accounts them, as mere experiments, presenting a store of novel harmonic contrivances of which future composers may freely avail themselves.

There are other modern writers, with Franz, whose work will support the theory of individualism in modern art. Liszt, Rubinstein, Brahms, Berlioz, Hiller, Jensen, Kirchner—each of these, in their capacity as song-writers, might be separately studied, in order to estimate his precise influence individually upon modern song-art. But I cannot presume to offer any detailed criticism, the more so as the works of these writers have been already so fully discussed by others. Mentioning Brahms, however, I may just refer to a certain technical faultiness, as I consider it, largely exhibited in modern song-composition—namely, the over-elaboration of accompaniments. It is not that in Brahms the piano passages are so very florid or intricate; yet there is, practically, a certain *uncomfortableness* about them—to any player not really a virtuoso. Needless to say, unless such accompaniments are rendered faultlessly they prove rather a hindrance than support to, not to speak of embellishment of, the vocal part. Still I am aware that nothing, perhaps, shows more the idiosyncrasy of the writer than the fashioning of his accompaniments; and that the hand of the amateur is not to regulate altogether the form in which a work of art shall be shaped. That it is possible, however, to exhibit simplicity—especially in such a thing as a song-accompaniment—without sacrificing aught of the essential part of the work can hardly be doubted, I think. Till I had made a closer acquaintance with Brahms I was led to regard him as a coldly intellectual writer; but I am of opinion that those once impressed by his powerful genius can never cease to rank among his admirers. Without the subtle, penetrative spirit of Liszt or Berlioz, there is a nervous concentration in his style which holds one as under a spell. Rubinstein's songs, again, are truly gems of modern musical lyrism. The truthfulness of the setting is allied at the same time with melody of such refined beauty and charm that none other but a genius of the highest order could produce. I am convinced that the composer's fame will rest as much upon

these small vocal pieces as upon any other works, of whatsoever extensive plans. In Hiller the purely musical charm of melody is not so apparent; but there is observable in Hiller's songs a declamatory style carried to the highest perfection. In Jensen we have a writer of refined feeling and most artistic expression whom I think I am justified in classing among the poetical composers, so to call them.

Writers quite of another stamp are those who treat a poetical thought only in its most superficial, sentimental, or conventional aspect. The aim of the composer is simply to secure a sensuously gratifying result — inventing his most pleasing melodies, and treating the voice for its own sake alone.

If we do not look for more, there is no doubt that, simply as musical pieces, there is much work done in this way very commendable. The writer, however, to whom I have referred contemptuously dubs composers of this sort "ennobled strolling minstrels (*ennoblirte Bankelsänger*)." As foremost representatives of this class stand, among modern German composers, Reissiger, Kücken, Proch, Abt, and Gumbert—the last being specially singled out by Reissmann for chastisement. There is a certain German song-composer whom I suppose he regards as too contemptible even to name — Fesca, to wit. I am tempted just to mention him (although in Fesca we may be said to reach the very *bas-fonds* of song-writing, so long as it has any pretension to art)—while even he will serve to point a moral. It is that, however much one may endeavour to musically illustrate poetic idea and sentiment, you may not lose sight of the claims of melody pure and simple. The one extreme has as much to be avoided as the other: a song without melody is, whatever pretensions it may otherwise have, perhaps a worse thing, on that account alone, than a song of Fesca's, which, as all will likely admit, is good melody of a sort—rich and luscious as some may deem it—but nothing more. Of course, herein lies the great difficulty of modern song-composition: while attempting to embody the poetic elements of the work, yet to preserve the strictly musical interest. Melodic forms rapidly becoming hackneyed and exhausted, recourse has to be had to less unusual motives. These we may claim as more refined; but there is a limit, I think, to what the ear will accept as melody independently satisfying. Such melody as Fesca's, on the other hand, becomes distasteful, nauseating, to the educated ear, and much cultivation of it undoubtedly vitiating to any taste.

In examining a little the formal element of song-music, I shall have little hesitation in referring to that writer who made really the first thorough examination of formal principles—Marx. Although Marx's large work on composition has been shown to have very little scientific basis, still his masterly analysis, along with his enthusiastic and philosophic style, serve to remove

his work from out the ordinary rut of students' text-books; and in what regards my subject there are some notes which I take to be of special value. Marx says that the poetic material best fitted for music is that in which the main quality resides in a certain general sentiment equally pervading the whole; in which the details in themselves are but of subordinate interest, —these, together, building up the total impression, but not claiming attention on their own account. With those poems dealing with a range of concrete or intellectual ideas,—though the underlying sentiment may be coloured musically, still the specialties of the poem (which possibly constitute its prime characteristic) are apt to be passed over; and so, regarding it in this light, a certain charge of superficiality might be made with respect to song-composition. A number of Goethe's songs, for instance, may be shown to lose in this way. This faultiness is especially noticeable in songs of simple strophic arrangement, where the music does not pledge itself to follow out and change with the varying ideas of the verse. As Marx justly observes, the more doubtful it is whether a poem be naturally suited to the strophic form in music—or whether, indeed, it calls for musical illustration at all—the more difficult the task of composition, and the more questionable the result. With respect to the more dramatic, or what, for want of a better term, has been called the "through-composed" form of musical setting, this becomes embarrassing with a poem of changeful elements, as it is a difficult matter to preserve unity, either in sentiment or form. Reissmann considers the question, as to which is the more preferable style of setting, an idle one; as he is of opinion that the only thing to decide is the form and length of the poem itself. For a short ballad in which the resultant impression is purely homogeneous (as in Goethe's "Fisher," for example) the strophic form is well in place; in a longer one, the continued repetition would bring about a monotony opposed to truthfulness of feeling and expression. Marx makes the following category of song-forms, according to their agreement with or deviation from the strictly strophic type: (1) Strophic, but in which certain changes in the poem shall be suitably expressed through the means, and on the part alone of, the singer; (2) small deviations in the poem correspondingly followed out in the music; (3) where the same melody shall have a different instrumental accompaniment, as in Beethoven's "Lieder-cyclus"; (4) where the varying sentiments of the poem shall be closely followed in the music—the "Durchcomponirte" style. Marx observes, with his characteristic acumen, that it is psychologically impossible that a condition of feeling shall for long remain unchanged. The mood in which we are set by the first strophe is necessarily affected by the second: in the exact repetition of the same thing even, we either feel increased interest or our attention diminishes. The *lied-*

form, it should be mentioned, is, strictly, of pure strophic order.

One branch of song composition in which the "through-composed" style is most properly employed, is the ballad. This is one of those many musical terms which we find applied to things most opposite in character. You will hardly thank me for presenting you with borrowed dictionary-information;—how the ancient ballad was properly accompanied by dancing; what were the gradual changes in its form and character,—this information a musical lexicon will, or should, afford. [Its modern connection in the concert-room of to-day is with that class of songs known as royalty songs, the verses of which are manufactured at so much per set.] The ballad proper is strictly *epic* in character; its story must be legendary or narrative, and dramatic movement more or less an essential element of the subject described or sung. No literature is richer than that of Great Britain in poems of this kind; but it is to the German poet Bürger (and, following him, Goethe, Schiller, and Uhland) that the ballad owes its more artistic form and polish. One particular composer there is who has shown himself pre-eminently qualified to musically illustrate the ballad. In Carl Löwe we have an instance of talent working in a special direction, the result outpassing the similar creations of other artists incomparably superior in higher branches of composition. Considered simply as music, there is much about the ballads of Löwe that seems to us, at this time, no doubt, old-fashioned or even commonplace; but, nevertheless, Löwe must be credited with having afforded us the best examples of what the ballad style in music should be. Even Schubert, in this department, must, taken altogether, be accounted inferior to Löwe: in "The Diver," for example, the vocal passages are too recitative-like; and the general style is wanting in that simplicity which is the chief characteristic of an ideal musical ballad;—the whole composition, in short, too much resembling an operatic *scena*. As Reissmann remarks, "Notwithstanding his eminent lyrical talent, modern subjective tendencies never, at any time, interfered with the classic, objective force of his style." Apart from his historic claims as an originator, I think more might be done in keeping up acquaintance with Löwe's ballads. It cannot be want of interest and charm that occasions our almost utter forgetfulness of him; in such pieces as "The Fisher," "The Recognition," not to speak of the longer and more characteristic ballads (such as "The Count of Hapsburg"), I can imagine still a great musical effect to be secured by their proper rendering. But, I confess, out of a private way I have never heard any of Löwe's ballads rendered: is it that singers, as well as audiences, are still unaware of their existence? or is it that there is so much difficulty in reviving such works, even such that, on production, would be

virtually novelties? Our biographical records pass over Löwe with but slight mention, as if he and his works had become quite things of the past. I shall not have time to enter into the discussion of the several varieties of ballad, as distinguished by Reissmann in his book: namely, the romance (of which Goethe's "Hedge-roses" affords an example), the sage, or rhapsodie ("The King of Thule," *e.g.*), and the long narrative poem, or ballad proper ("The Diver" of Schiller).

Although, in all songs that respect the words as of any importance, distinctness of enunciation is the chief practical desideratum, in no class of musical setting so much as in the ballad would the effect of the music be so diminished should the words be not clearly heard. Perhaps it is to satisfy fully this requirement, as well as to widen the bounds of the art, that introduction has been sought for the "ballad of declamation." I believe Schumann, in his Opus 122, first made this new departure; Liszt and Reinecke have followed with new examples. This style, of course, has strictly a dramatic origin; and we are well acquainted with the effect in melodramatic stage-pieces and in certain operas (notably in "Fidelio") occasioned by bringing in music as an accompaniment to the ordinary speaking-voice. With a piece of this kind, whatever its æsthetic *rationale* may be in connection with dramatic action, as a *musical* performance, strictly so called, in the "ballad of declamation" we are altogether referred to the accompaniment for its justification on this ground. Now the musical interest being dependent almost solely upon the pianoforte part, the motives or strains ought to be at least clearly distinguishable, and of themselves they should be independently musically interesting. Now in theatrical melodrama the music is simply undercurrent;—it has to be kept *sotto voce*, so as not to interfere with the audibleness of the words of the actor: it is sufficient if musical sound, simply as such, intensifies the situation—the ear is not concerned very much with the examination of the musical figures of the accompaniment. Now although we know song is but ordinary speech intensified and extended, when the melodramatic accompaniment is made of sufficient prominence, it seems to be doing battle with the voice,—simply because the vocal tones and intervals are not regulated, and so do not fall concordant with those of the accompaniment. Practically, these pieces are most difficult to perform, the pianoforte passages, whenever they have much individuality—not altogether dealing in *tremolando* harmonies with occasional *sforzando* bursts—become blurred and distorted through the endeavour of the pianist to keep properly going with the reciter. I remember once making a trial of these pieces, privately, with a friend, and the effect was certainly discouraging, not to say ludicrous. Apart from the tendency to part company at every bar, the contrast of the pianoforte tones with

the ordinary speaking-voice had truly a comical effect—the melodramatic associations of the stage having no doubt much to do with this. Though in the proper hands I can fancy these practical difficulties overcome, still, seeing that we are herein deprived of the pleasure of vocal music, commonly so understood, while the power of presenting and following out on the instrument themes or melodies of independent musical merit must, for the reasons already given, necessarily be extremely limited, I cannot judge the limits of musical art to be much extended through the introduction of this novel form. Song-curiosities, quite in an opposite way, are those wherein the voice is treated strictly as a musical instrument—taking part in trios, quartets, and such works written on ordinary classic plan, having to resort to *solfeggi* syllables as a means of displaying itself. I must admit I have made no acquaintance with this kind of vocal music; and even had it been otherwise, I could then have made but this passing reference to it, which will serve to show into what artificial forms the endeavour to widen the boundaries of art may sometimes lead us.

And, now, as regards the words themselves to which the music is to be set, the least requirement that can be made is that they shall be independently satisfying as poetry. Poets themselves, I fancy, are rather apt to undervalue the claims of music in this respect: any sort of matter is supposed good enough as "words for music." It demands, indeed, the æsthetic instinct of the musician himself to recognise the poem peculiarly offering itself for musical setting. The qualities of the poetic material which a song-writer demands are hardly to be defined. If the words themselves are not of artistic importance, or if the music, however pleasing and effective independently, does not primarily rely upon the due elicitation of the poetical ideas, the words fail to comply with what I judge to be the requirements of the modern artistic song proper.

Making all allowance for individual tastes, such a poet as Burns I might put forward, in a certain view, as an ideal writer of verse for musical treatment. Here the sentiment—of the most simple, heartfelt character, the outpouring of a genuine nature—is such that may appeal widely to all sympathies; while, at the same time, the artistic expression is such that will admit of as polished a setting as you may wish—provided care is taken to secure the rightful colouring, and strike the true emotional key of the poetry. The fact of most of Burns's songs having been originally fitted to, and most likely prompted by, previously existing melodies, may account naturally for their extreme suitableness for musical treatment. Speaking of this particular poet, I may just remark that the intimate association between some of the poems and the old strains to which they were set prevents, perhaps, the hope of any new setting which shall become very popular. No true-

born Scotsman would ever think of singing "The Banks o' Doon" to any other melody than that which invariably accompanies this song. When we consider, however, how greatly superior the poetry is, in this instance, to the music—though the latter, no doubt, may claim a certain musical-historic interest, apart from its poetical associations—modern composers need not, I think, feel the injunction anent any fresh musical treatment of these songs (with the reservation, perhaps, of just one or two), very strictly bearing upon them. German composers, certainly, do not seem to have minded it; but the setting of Burns's songs by Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Franz, among others, fine as in themselves they without doubt are, seem to me, if I may explain it so, somehow to lack the true breeze of the Scotch heather. But this is simply a personal impression. I am quite prepared to find others differ entirely from me in this judgment. Though we may recognise the happy touch of some composer in musically reflecting the very atmosphere and aroma, so to speak, of the poetry,—still it is curious to note, as I remarked before, when speaking of Franz, how it is open for some other to do equally well the same thing, whose mode of expression shall, very likely, be entirely different. But, of course, the one setting may so take upon the general fancy as to make it difficult for any others to obtain a hearing. Beyond the direct interest of the work itself, there is that additional pleasure to be had in studying the individuality of the composer reflected in his work, and in making comparison between *his* treatment of a particular poem and that of others, which yet many, I think, entirely come short of. I would not have the music made a subordinate thing to the poetry any more than I would have it claim the whole interest. We may understand well how it could be that Goethe should prefer a setting of his poetry by Zelter to the same by Beethoven: the one enters too much into musical rivalry with the verse; the other does little more than afford a gentle, sympathetic underflow to the words, which was all the poet really looked for.

In certain of our modern writers the task of a faithfully close musical setting grows so much in difficulty, while the *nuance* of feeling becomes more delicately defined. It has been said, for example, that Mr. Tennyson's songs "sing themselves." This, however, must be accepted rather as regarding the perfect musical rhythm and assonance of the versification than the poetical essence of the verse itself; because I can hardly believe any poetical thought or sentiment so ethereal, dainty, or fine but that music can find its tone in responsive vibration, provided simply the formal expression is adapted also to the rhythmical and other formal necessities of musical exposition. It requires, in those who would set such verse to music, a corresponding delicacy of touch, together with that refinement

of æsthetic perception which shall enable them to enter into the subtle feeling of the poet—not merely to follow out the concrete ideas of the poetry. The risk of failure then becomes greater; and where then the success is not complete one might perhaps be excused for thinking that the poem is better, after all, *without* than *with* musical accompaniment. And so, I imagine, must Mr. Tennyson himself think; as I am led to understand that, if he countenances, he does not regard with much favour, the different musical settings of his songs.

There is a certain order of modern poetry which, upon reading, leaves upon one an impression very similar, it may be said, to that produced by music itself, but which, nevertheless, would seem to elude altogether a musical setting. I may take as illustrative specimens of this kind of poetry the more characteristic poems of the French writer Théophile Gautier. The charm of his best work is produced not so much by depicting with intensity some specific emotion as by grouping with an artistic touch and exquisitely keen sense of poetic association subjects which in themselves may not, perhaps, be deemed so very highly poetical; and which charm is further enhanced by the delicately wrought versification. The resultant impression is decidedly a lyrical one; but the poetic material is hardly the same as that which we generally look for in a musical lyric. [I require here a word which shall be an equivalent to the German word *Stimmung*. The word *mood* is too passive in its meaning: it denotes rather a condition favourable to the reception of impressions than the more positive shade of feeling which I wish to qualify. Moreover, the word has become rather twisted in its application: a *mood*-y person we do not take to be one opening himself, at the time, to artistic impressions.] We ought to be able to distinguish a certain colouring disposition of feeling in which we may be set from emotion ordinarily so called. Just as we may view, for instance, scenes in nature under certain *nuances* of aspect—say, in the mellow light of an October afternoon, and so forth—each leaving its own peculiar impression on the æsthetic sense, indefinable, however, in words—so we discover an analogous quality or condition (by whatever term it may be distinguished) resident in, or produced by, certain works in art. For this, in poetry, the musician has to find the rightful expression in music; and this, as I have said, becomes more and more in modern work a matter of delicacy and refinement. If I have mentioned this particular French poet, it is not that he solely exhibits in his work these subtle characteristics. As far as technical structure is concerned, we should find also, following Marx's theories, that much of this poetry hardly presents itself to the musician. Many present, no doubt, had the pleasure (denied to me), last season, of attending the performance of the set of Gautier's poems set to music by Berlioz; to these, in

this place, I can hardly do else than make reference. With what rare felicity of touch Berlioz has reflected the spirit of the poetry, apart from the refined charm of the music in itself, you will be able better than I to judge. These particular pieces, however, I do not regard as those best illustrating what I have said with respect to Gautier's style in general. Though very dainty things, they conform more than certain others—as the "Fantaisies," "Elégies," and "Paysages," of the poet's earlier period, not to speak of the "Emaux et Camées Lyriques"—to the ordinary style of lyric poetry.

Although I am not about to go over the ground already so well traversed by Mr. Salaman in his paper, read some time ago before this Association, on the subject of the English language in relation to song, still, while minded of this in discussing a foreign writer, I may be allowed just to indorse Mr. Salaman's view, when he says that though "he does not lay claim for the English language that it is the best for song—it is at least as good a language for English men and women to sing as any other;" and I feel tempted to go, perhaps, a little further, in advancing my opinion that the English language should be the *only* language employed by English singers. Though we may not altogether charge the singer with affectation in giving the song with the original words—as there can be no doubt that the vocal passages are most easily rendered with these, as well as the proper desire likely prompting the singer to present the work exactly as the composer left it—still, I am afraid the large presumption we should make upon the linguistic capabilities of the audience may seem, at times, to outweigh these latter considerations. On the other hand, at present we should have to put up with so many poor translations, or debar ourselves from hearing many choice things, the words of which may either have had an unsatisfactory translation, or none at all. I am well aware no translation can ever hope to rank equal to the original; nevertheless, I think on this point a little more artistic talent might be profitably expended in the production of better things. The work of preparing translations of the songs of German and French writers most generally gets committed to inferior hands: the work is slovenly and indifferently done. Let the words be of ever such dainty expression, and the worth of the translation altogether, or in the main part, depend upon catching the peculiarities of thought and style of the poet—no matter: any rhyming jingle is thought good enough to swing along with the music. The most musical and perfect translation that I am acquainted with is that of Burns's songs, by Adolf Laun, in German. I wish our English adapters would take such work as their model. Translation of words is, of course, a similar thing to arrangement of musical ideas: those who could do the work most fittingly, those with the musical ear required, will, I imagine, hardly care

to bend themselves to the task. Although, in German literature, Goethe and Schiller, like two giants, seem to dwarf all that come after, still there are such writers as Lenau, Eichendorff, Kerner, Osterwald, Chamisso, Geibel, and Roquette, among others, whom we, in default likely of an adequate rendering, hardly sufficiently appraise, I think. Even the prince of musical lyrists—Heine—is hardly known to English readers, except by way of the indifferent translation of Bowring. Not but that there is much in these writers which could hardly be deemed of so much importance, if it were not for the reason that such composers as Schumann and Franz have chosen them for musical treatment; but so long as, for the sake of the music, you make a translation, it should, I think, be as good as it can possibly be made.

In view of the difficulty a composer generally experiences in obtaining words, not only suitable for song-setting in general, but that shall, moreover, appeal to his individual taste, it has often been questioned whether the musician himself might not profitably attempt versification, and so become his own poet. If those are right who hold that all artistic talent is essentially the same thing, merely differing according to the material it works with, it would seem that there is nothing in nature to prevent the musician—after some little technical preparation, possibly—making, for a time, a convenient exchange of places with the poet. Now this is one of those theories which commonly get put forward by gossipy old amateurs of the Gardner type. Only that we do not find practical experience to lend much confirmation to their views. No doubt you will have your thoughts inevitably turned towards Wagner, as at least one most notable instance in support of the theory. But I am not contending that it is impossible for the two offices to be combined in the same person, but simply that the musician may not be expected to become poet by virtue altogether of his musician's faculty. Something more is required in the one art than the mere ability to arrange words rhythmically and group verses in rhyme,—if this is all that is meant, well and good; but this no more makes the poet than the acquirement of writing chords according to given rules of harmony makes the musician. On the other hand, given the underlying nature to be the same, the specific faculties are generally distinct and non-interchangeable. Wagner may be taken, if you please, as one of the phenomenal exceptions to this rule. There may even be the true poetical nature without the ability, however, to declare it in any way. As Swinburne says: "Poetical feeling is not poetry." There may be some with as deep a love of Nature, and as keen a sense of her hidden affinities as Wordsworth, for example, possessed; but the faculty which would give to their feelings and ideas a like artistic expression shall be wanting to them. Now, if the musician, by simple virtue of the same feel-

ing which we suppose he shares with the poet, could produce works belonging to the special department of the latter, so might we expect it of the ordinary man of true poetic nature,—which as just remarked, is not to be done. In a general way the would-be protean artist, according to the groove out of which he improperly steps, either produces feeble, amateurish music, or his poetry is mere sickly rhyming—simply "dancing to the tune," as Mr. Tennyson says. In short, this is a dilettantish notion, in the discussion of which I need no longer occupy you.

It may be considered whether the qualities in a song which entitle it to take rank as an art-work necessarily fit it at the same time to satisfy all the requirements for an effective production in public. Or, to put it differently: Is its fitness for open presentation to be a necessary condition upon which it is referred to our judgment? Can we at all proceed with the examination of any piece of music wedded to words if it does not appear to offer itself, and show itself primarily intended, for practical realisation; and, moreover, show that the vocal part has been treated with a view to the capabilities of the voice, affording it suitable material for natural and effective display? Though the reply can hardly be other than a negative one, we may still have to consider whether it may not be, as with certain classes of instrumental music, that certain places, circumstances, and surroundings having to do with the public production of the song, are not properly fitting for certain styles and classes of song-music. Though it may be established that a song, to claim merit, must at least be effectively singable, the consideration of where and how it is to be brought forward may not be altogether a minor and independent one. A song, fulfilling all art-conditions, may yet be altogether unsuited for performance in a large concert-room, owing to the absence of certain elements indispensable to effective production in public. To bring forward here, say, some setting of a couple of short stanzas to music in the German lied style, would be like exhibiting a cabinet photograph in an amphitheatre. Or the piece, on the other hand, may be too long. Such a piece as Schubert's "Diver," for example, however well, as in this, the interest may be sustained, might be found too long for a vocal solo. In a non-musical recitation the length of the poem is not so much a point to be conditioned: we read to ourselves, or have read to us, a short lyric or the whole act of a drama, without remarking either the one as too short or the other too long. But in music in some way it is different: there seems to be a certain due limit for musical display—varying, of course, with the different classes of work—out of which, on the one side, the work is either unsatisfying, or, on the other, felt as diffuse and tedious. As with some movement in an instrumental chamber composition, if it lasts over some twenty minutes, we make complaint; we imagine that in that time the composer should

have been able to present his themes, develop them, and re-present them. With too short a vocal work the singer has not time to bring the audience into the proper sentiment of the piece; the climax, if any, is arrived at too suddenly; and the musical impression is likely to be evanescent. For their unsuitability in these ways I acccount it that so many hundred little gems of song-art are put, practically, out of the way of public hearing. Evidently this is the idea of some singers themselves, seeing that they have sought to lengthen their performance by combining two or more songs in a set, rendering them consecutively. But I question the propriety of this procedure—stringing together works which, however small, are artistically complete in themselves. The impression produced by the one song becomes blurred by that of the other: there is that want of *unity*, too, an essential condition of every art-presentation;—instead of a single climax we have a series of distinct emotional crises. Of course it is different with those compositions which have been artistically thrown into cyclus-form: it is the composer's fault if the inherent connection of the different pieces, and their formal disposal under the governing principle of unity, are wanting. I need hardly refer, either, to the inartistic evil of simply repeating words and phrases, in the endeavour thus to expand the general outline. This, for effect, may very well be done in places; but one can readily perceive when it is done with an artistic intention or not. And then, again, with respect to the poem to which the music is wedded, there are certain lyrical pieces of such tender and dainty expression that seem altogether to lose their charm when declaimed before a large assembly; and if this is so with respect to the poem itself, the feeling can hardly be altered through the words becoming allied to music—that is, if the music is to be truly in sympathy with the poem, not such that does little more than accept the words as a vehicle for vocal utterance, and that might else just as well exist without them. Compositions of the latter sort must be taken as belonging to that class of songs which have been styled "instrumental pieces for the voice." I am not altogether inveighing against these: perhaps the best of their kind find their proper place in the large concert-room;—it is simply that with that class of song-music that requires on the part of the listener a very refined appreciation of poetical as well as musical *nuance* of sentiment, we may not be surprised if, before the ordinary concert-gathering, they may not make much impression. The delicate plant of artistic, as well as that of natural growth, must be cultivated in the atmosphere specially congenial to itself. Where the music and the words are so mutually dependent—as in the songs of Franz, for instance—to hear simply the music without the words, you do not, in a sense, hear the piece at all. Now perhaps only half of the

audience will hear or concern themselves about the words; of that half, only the half, again, may possess the required poetical taste; while, of the remainder, many may find, as I say, their somewhat realistic surroundings tend to hinder the reception of the complete lyrical impression, which I am assuming is the thing sought. Or it may be evident that the singer is bent only on securing a simply musical effect with *his* or *her* voice, without troubling themselves very much with the poetical motive of the work. One is inclined to liken certain lyrical settings to a class of literary dramas, better fitted for an imaginatory reproduction in one's own study or before their instrument than for realistic performance on the stage or platform. Still I am not forgetful that the primary mission of a song is to be sung; and that if we in our aims were to be deterred by the disappointments, difficulties, and disillusions attending always the realisation of poetic conceptions, there would be an end of all art, properly so called. All that I would seek to infer, then, is that the musical song-writer who would seek after a more intimate and recondite union with words must be prepared to find his audience correspondingly narrowed.

Even if these ideas are only accepted as fanciful, and assuming that the audience will be able to comprehend and appreciate the most refined specimens of song-art, it is unfortunately the fact that comparatively few opportunities are allowed them of making acquaintance with the *recherché* works in this department of musical art. Our best singers have a limited *répertoire* of popular ditties to which they confine themselves; so that many are quite unacquainted with the works of those modern writers whom I have mentioned. It may be remarked, perhaps, that, in addition to the works of these, we have a sufficiently good store of our own native music, both of past and contemporary writers, which ought not to be overlooked. This is very true; and I am aware, that outside the line of modern artistic song, there will always exist a wealth of English melody, the naïve and unaffected outcome of simple genius, adopted and cherished by the people itself, which will always claim its place. But between these two classes of song I would allow no intermediary class—or any that fails to comply with demands other than those of inane fashion. It is somewhat amusing to watch the veerings of popular taste. We have at one time songs of a nautical character—then of a semi-sacred style—songs about home—of far-away—flower songs—sudden transitions from subjects rough and jolly to others of maudlin sentiment. I know there are many writers who hold themselves aloof from the task of writing down to the vulgar taste; and had not particular reference to them been so delicate a matter, their works might, as well as those of any German writer, have served to support my argument. In the German song, however, we

notice a more steady growth, both formally and ideally;—as I have tried to make clear, the one composer seems to take up where the other leaves off: Schubert completes the strivings of the Berlin school of writers; Schumann follows upon Schubert; and so on. Franz opens again a new direction; but the advance throughout is consistent. While in England, where we do not go altogether upon the old lines, the style of setting very often presents but a reflex of the German spirit. We ought to make a corresponding movement, but without losing the English sentiment and idiom of expression. And then, with the difficulty of securing presentation of their works, I am afraid composers are oft apt to sacrifice somewhat of their higher aims in the endeavour to make their song a concert success, as well as an artistic one—to kill the proverbial two birds.

There is a reproach, too, aimed at those who are simply song-writers and nothing else. This Robert Franz—the most notable instance of a composer devoting himself to one special line of work—has not escaped. But as modern art becomes more differentiated, even the smaller forms, such as the song, may perhaps be brought to make up for what they lack in the affording of opportunity for the exhibition of skill in development on extended plans,—by intensity of feeling and refinement of expression. A song-composer may be credited with having produced a great work, though he may not have worked on a big canvas with a big brush.

However, I have carefully avoided the vexed question as to the relative importance of music pure and simple, and music in union with words. There are those who hold the latter to rank in æsthetic value much below the former; and I have met with some, having a correct taste for instrumental art, with quite a dislike, however, for song-music. The dilettante Riehl, though himself author of a collection of songs, is of opinion that in trying to amalgamate both arts you merely bring about a mongrel confusion of elements. If any points in my paper should elicit remarks by any present, I trust discussion may be kept wide of this question, as I am doubtful if any understanding could be arrived at here. I have assumed that the art which consists in combining word and tone has its own independent æsthetic valuation. The examination of these component elements, in their relation each to the other,—their gradually closer approach in the past; and what I conceive to be the tendency of song-composition in the future—was as much as I could trust myself to enter into on this occasion.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN.—I do not unfortunately read German, and, therefore, though everything affecting the sister voice and verse is very interesting to me, as far as the German language is concerned I am sorry to say I must be mute, but I hope our friend Mr. Goldschmidt will be able to say something about it. We must all be very much obliged to Mr. Breakspeare for the large range over which he has taken us with regard to song and music, and I hope some gentleman will make some remarks either in opposition to his views, or in support of them.

Mr. GOLDSCHMIDT.—I do not know that I have any particular views to offer with reference to the very able paper we have heard. Perhaps the few remarks I have to make should follow the paper as far as I could follow it myself. With reference to the chief critic whom our lecturer has quoted, Reissmann, of course it is a difficult matter to say anything, because Reissmann is a contemporary of ours, and posterity will have to consider how far he can be considered so much of a judge as our excellent lecturer has made him. With reference to German songs it certainly seems to me that Mozart, Reichardt, and Weber are those who developed German song out of the Volkslied. Weber's songs, which are very little known, and Mozart's songs, which have been lately republished in that beautiful uniform edition at Leipzig, seem to be almost forgotten; but I believe those songs in their simplicity more approach the English ballad than any German songs I know. I do not think justice has been done to the English ballad. To my mind this form of "song," whether German or any other (and of course Gounod himself has written very beautiful songs), is very narrow, and, as has been pointed out, when we come to didactic utterances, such as Schumann's "Der Königssohn" and the like, they can hardly be called songs. They approach the modern style which finds its culmination in Wagner's opera, and that is a very vexed ground, and the less we go into it the better, perhaps. With reference to Franz's songs I believe they quite fall into the category which the lecturer has described; they are so ephemeral, and the words and the music are so welded together, that you can hardly expect them to make any great impression in a concert-room; indeed, a big concert-room like St. James' Hall is hardly a fit place for a song, whether German or English. Of the more modern German song-composers I should think probably Jensen would live the longest; and there is another composer of German songs, Lassen, who has written some charming songs which will become known in this country, I have no doubt. But I want to point out that

Germany is not the only country of songs. I have the good fortune and happiness of being fairly well acquainted with Scandinavia; I cannot speak of Denmark, but both Norway and Sweden have each produced a composer who, if their songs could be translated, would certainly rank in importance and genius with most of the modern German composers. One is the Swedish composer who was most highly valued by all his great contemporaries of this century, Lindblad, and the other—who is, alas! only just dead—is Kjerulf, a Norwegian; so that the two sister countries, Sweden and Norway, have produced, as far as I am able to judge, two most accomplished composers in that branch. They are both distinctly original, and both as much Scandinavian as German composers are German; and in that respect I fancy one must repeat that the vein of song is not one which we can describe, and ticket, and classify, but that where there is really genius for music it will push itself through, and make itself heard in its own way. And that, I fancy, applies equally to England: for my own part I was never able to see why a fine ballad has not as much right to be admired as a fine song of Schubert or Schumann. A ballad expresses that which is in the mind and the heart of the nation, particularly English ballads, such as those of Burns, or the magnificent songs of Moore. Again with regard to modern ballads, Mr. Sullivan has written songs which I think will live and ought to live. It is not the fault of the modern composers if, failing any wider or greater paths, they have to resort for obvious reasons to writing for the shops, or the public, or whatever the term may be. It is the fault of the public or the audience which is not sufficiently educated to permit them to write such songs as they would rather write than these minor things. The modern English ballad, to my mind, is the outcome of the national English ballad, such as we find among early Scotch, Welsh, or English songs, as they are given in Mr. Chappell's "Ballad Literature and Popular Music of the Olden Time," and elsewhere. These are essentially national, and only require a little better taste on the part of the public and publishers to be better appreciated. I think the lecturer has confined himself a little too much to German songs, although I certainly have no reason to find fault on that account. There is one immense difficulty, but that I fancy will lessen from day to day, although in some cases it seems insurmountable, and that is the difficulty of translation. In my own experience one of the very best English translators was the late Mr. Bartholomew; he really loved his work, and he came up very much to what the lecturer mentioned. He sat day after day, not only over the translation of a verse, but over single lines, and it is for that reason that some of his translations, sacred works and others, are so very good. Although, in some

cases, I have subsequent editions of works where he had not furnished a translation, I always refer to his, for they were the translations of a man who did not work merely for so much a page, but was an artist himself, and exactly represented what the lecturer pointed out as so necessary: he was almost a poet himself. With reference to the Norwegian song-composer just mentioned, I have had his two volumes of songs lately before me, and have heard several of them sung; they are about eighty in number, partly Norwegian and partly Swedish, but many of them are actually translations of Moore's and other English poems. They have been published in the national language to which they were set with additional German words; but the German translations are so atrocious that the songs cannot be sung to them. Those who know the original language can fancy what a song of Moore's translated into Norwegian, and then retranslated into German would be, and that is the exact state of those songs. I do not quite agree with our lecturer with regard to only English being sung. If these songs were sung in their original tongue, and the English translation put side by side, it seems to me that those who do not care for the words in any case will not follow them, but those who do care for the words, can follow in their own language what is heard sung, as the composer meant it. There is only one other point to which I may refer, because I have some personal knowledge of the subject, and that is with reference to Mr. Tennyson's songs. I suppose the great majority of those present admire Mr. Tennyson's genius, and it would be presumptuous in me to refer to his poetry *qua* poetry, but as a musician I must say I never came across any poetry which lent itself naturally and distinctly to music less than that of Mr. Tennyson. It may be that the poems are complete in themselves, and therefore are a canvas with a painting on, and not a drawing, because that really illustrates the relation. A song, to a composer, if it shall speak to him so as to elicit the best form of his art, must be like a beautiful sketch which he has to fill in; but if you come across the metre of Mr. Tennyson's verse in its complete form, I should say there never was a more difficult task than to set that to music. I believe those ladies and gentlemen who have looked at that very remarkable volume of Tennyson's songs which was produced a year or two ago, not only by English composers but by composers of almost every land, would really see, if they gave any attention to it, what struggles all those composers (and I have the honour to be one) had to do justice to their task. As compared with the German language, certainly the English language is not easy for songs of that class such as Germany abounds in. I should seek the reason partly in the great practical purport of English poetry in general; there is less

sentiment than is acknowledged and permitted in German poetry. And I should seek also another reason in the structure of the English language; in German a great number of the words are disyllabic or polysyllabic, but English words at the present day—in the Middle Ages it may have been different—are mostly those of one syllable—powerful ones. If I were to quote a practical instance of that, I should like to quote a psalm of Mendelssohn's which has come within the last few days under my notice—a psalm in which one would have thought there would have been much less difficulty to find the proper equivalent in the English language. It is the 98th, and the German words begin "Let us sing unto the Lord 'ein neues Lied.'" What had the English translator to do? He did not want to add to the adjective, and so he put "Let us sing a new-made song." We all know what new-made bread is, but "a new-made song" is terrible. I just mention that to show a difficulty which all translators find in adapting words to *given* music. And if this is applicable to sacred writ, which is common to all nations, how much more must it be applicable to ephemeral poetry, which is the outcome of special national feeling only!

The Chairman.—After the exhaustive speech of Mr. Goldschmidt, it would be presumptuous in me to say anything more; but I may be allowed to observe that I think the paper we have heard will be very useful to us all in this way—that it will draw our attention more strongly than ever to the character of the words we have to employ in song-writing. With regard to the melody, the lecturer observed that the melody must be properly suited to the words. Of course we all know that; but I would further remark that it is as true now as it was in Aristotle's time, and in the time of "the judicious Hooker," that melody or song, quite independent of words, has its own sentiment and feeling. If people do not recognise that, they are led very often into very great mistakes. In my own particular case I have noticed this more with regard to church music, and especially in some of those dreadful things which are done by setting solemn words to opera or other secular music. This would never be done if people did not lose sight of this principle, which I think ought to be remembered not only in sacred music but in secular music also, that melody has in itself a kind of sentiment—that it adapts itself to the human mind; it does not express any definite distinct idea, but it adapts itself to that frame of mind, or to that kind of sentiment which is adapted to this or that occasion. For instance, nobody would deny that by all martial music feelings of courage and manliness are stirred; and that soft Lydian measures tend to produce erotic feelings, and make men express themselves as they would to their mistresses and so

on. To take one kind of melody which is expressive of a particular sentiment, and to set it to words expressing a different meaning, is quite an outrage on common sense. There is also, I would observe, a kind of neutral melody—as, for instance, in the case of a ballad—of which I am quite as fond as Mr. Goldschmidt. The ballad may be considered as a pure liquid into which you may infuse any manner of sentiment, and in the poetic words which are adjoined to it almost any sentiment you like. There is a pleasing melody which in itself does not suggest any particular sentiment, but it may be adapted to the changing sentiments of the various verses of the ballad, so that in that respect the ballad is a very suitable expression both of national and individual feeling. We must recollect also that music was not intended only for large places; it should permeate the whole pleasure and enjoyment of life. It is part of the expression of those feelings which we all have in common; it is a very humanitarian accomplishment, and should never be considered a mere amusement of the idle. It is a mode of expression of the inmost feelings of the human heart, and as such, both in the ballad and in lyrics, and in anything else which is used in music, I think there is a means of doing good to one another, and expressing those sentiments which adorn and beautify humanity. You will now allow me to convey to Mr. Breakspeare a vote of thanks for the very able paper he has given us.

The vote of thanks having been passed—

Mr. Breakspeare.—I thank you very much, gentlemen, for your kind attention, and I am particularly grateful to Mr. Goldschmidt for following out and amplifying my remarks. As far as I had to do with the German lied, it was only as an endeavour to make out that in the German lied we get a more consistent growth from the early ballad, where the words have a very vague musical expression, down to recent times in which the words are more carefully considered, and that I had not noticed, perhaps, in other countries that same thing. The reason why I did not refer to those composers mentioned by Mr. Goldschmidt, and to many others, was that if I attempted to deal with them all I should have left myself no time to bring forward what I intended to be the leading principle of the paper—namely, that the song-composer should endeavour to illustrate a poetical idea, and that this gradually becomes more and more considered. As regards ballads, the term is very ambiguous, and many things might be included under that title. In speaking of a ballad one might be considering the old national songs, or one might be thinking of the modern songs of the day, which of course are totally distinct things in their character. I am sure I have met with many examples of the modern ballad which showed much poetical feeling and genuine poetic sentiment; but, on the other

hand, there are many examples of that class which are simply imitations, and which I am sure you must with me deem to be only for the shop: of course I cannot say what their value may be; but a musical composition is only valuable so far as it expresses a poetical idea, and is imbued with genuine musical sentiment, and sincerity of feeling and expression.

February 6, 1882.

W. H. CUMMINGS, Esq.,

In the Chair.

X Bibliography

ON SOME ITALIAN AND SPANISH TREATISES ON MUSIC OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

By the Rev. Sir F. A. Gore Ouseley, Bart., M.A., Mus. Doc., President of the Association.

About three years ago I had the privilege of reading a paper before this Association "On the Early Italian and Spanish Treatises on Counterpoint and Harmony." At that time I had almost made up my mind not to carry on my remarks beyond the limits of the sixteenth century. I said that "the reason I had given no specimens of works of the seventeenth century was that it was about that time that modern tonality took its rise, mainly through the innovations introduced by Monteverde, and that the art was thus revolutionised." At the same time I thought that perhaps "on some future occasion I might be allowed to trace the progress of the art down to more recent periods." This further history of the theoretical development of the art of music is the subject on which I wish to enlist your kind attention to-day. It is by no means so easy to treat of this later period as it was of the earlier, because so many treatises were published in the seventeenth century that the task of selection becomes very difficult, and also because some musical facts and theories are involved which have no small bearing on controversies still under discussion at the present day. Before the seventeenth century modulation from key to key, as we now understand it, did not exist. Indeed, there could hardly be said to be any really fixed tonality beyond that of the old ecclesiastical scales, to which all music was rigidly conformed, except indeed such rustic melodies and dance-tunes as had escaped the influence of the scholastic theories then in vogue.

Fétis rightly names the kind of music then taught and practised "*l'ordre unitonique*." The tendency of fundamental discords to resolve on a tonic chord was unknown, or rather, I

should say, unrecognised. Unfelt I do not think it was altogether, since there exist a few Church compositions as old as Jusquin Desprès which clearly evince this tendency, especially in their cadences. But this was the case rather *accidentally* than intentionally, or, perhaps I should say, it arose from a kind of instinctive craving, which might have led to a recognition of the functions of the dominant harmony, had it not been for the cruel old rule which ostracised the tritone and the diminished fifth, and would only tolerate the minor seventh as a prepared dissonance. Attempts were made from time to time to introduce new harmonic combinations in the interests of variety. Palestrina himself made many such experiments; but still no real harmonic advances could be made until the power of proceeding from one key to another by means of the chord of the dominant seventh and its derivatives was discovered and applied. Up to that time harmony consisted of concords, discords of suspension, and discords by passing-notes; whilst fundamental discords were unrecognised, and modulation consequently impossible. It is truly marvellous how such noble music could have arisen, under such conditions, as was produced by the great writers of the Palestrina school. We cannot honour those ancient giants too highly. This is not a paper on harmony, but still it will not be amiss to say a few words on the steps by which the old system of tonality of the fifteenth century became gradually converted into that which now prevails. It was not until the time of Monteverde, a composer who was born in 1568 and died in 1643, that fundamental discords came into use. He appears to have introduced them into his madrigals and operas by the force of his genius, and not through any philosophical perception of their importance. Artusi and others attacked him fiercely, and would have none of his innovations. But, for all that, these prevailed and triumphed, for they were founded on nature, and soon became necessary to art. To Monteverde we may, then, ascribe the origin of modern tonality—modulation by the use of the dominant seventh, cadences in which that chord was used without preparation, the addition thereto of the dominant major and minor ninths and their inversions—all these novelties combined to produce such a system of fixed tonality as we nowadays regard as a necessity, but which was altogether absent from the more ancient music. Fétis has named this system "*l'ordre transitonique*" on account of the power thus acquired of passing from one key to another by the use of the fundamental dominant harmony. It is important to bear in mind: first, that this complete transformation of the whole system of tonality in music took place during the former half of the seventeenth century, and, secondly, that theorists were slow to admit the new principles involved in the change. Without duly considering these facts we could not adequately ap-

preciate the relative value of the various treatises which I am about to lay before you. As our attention will be confined to-day to the writers of the seventeenth century, I need not go on to explain at length the subsequent improvements which the art of music received in the matter of harmony during the eighteenth and ninteenth centuries. Suffice it to say that these were chiefly the result of the enharmonic equivocation, and consequent modulating facilities, which reside in such chords as that of the diminished seventh, the augmented sixth, and the augmented triad. Fétis calls this "*l'ordre pluritonique*," because by the enharmonic change the same note may belong to several different keys. But I have now said enough on this preliminary matter of harmonic history. It is time to proceed to the consideration of the works I have to introduce to your notice.

In my former paper the following authors were treated of: *Franchinus Gaffurius*, 1451-1522; *Peter Aron*, 1489-1560; *Giovanni Spataro*, 1460-1541; *Ramis de Pareja*, 1440-±1525; *Stefano Vanneo*, 1493-±1560; *Ludovico Fogliano*, ±1490-1539; *Vincenzo Lusitano*, dates unknown; *Nicola Vicentino*, 1511-?; *Aiguino da Bressa*, 1520-?; *Giuseppe Zarlino*, 1517-1590; *Vincenzo Galilei*, 1533-?; *Francisco Salinas*, 1512-1590; *Domenico Pietro Cerone*, 1566-?; and *Lodovico Zacconi*, ±1550-±1630. To-day the first name that comes before us is that of *Giovanno Maria Artusi*, who was a Regular Canon of St. Saviour's at Bologna, which was his native city. The dates of his birth and death are not known, but his various publications range from 1586 to 1607. He is chiefly known as a severe and bitter antagonist and critic of the various innovations in music which began to be made in his lifetime. His learning was doubtless great, but it was simply the knowledge of tradition; we find but little philosophy, and less reasoning, in his treatises. His earliest publication was a treatise on counterpoint: "L'Arte di Contrappunto ridotto in Tavole" (folio, Venice, 1586), of which the sequel came out three years later, also at Venice, with the title "Seconde Parte, nella quale si tratta dell' utile ed uso delle dissonanze." This is perhaps his best work, because it is the least controversial. I never have been fortunate enough to meet with a copy of the second volume, but I have placed my copy of the first part on the table, as it is a rare book, and some may perhaps care to examine it. His next work was brought out in 1600, at Venice, and in folio. It is called "L'Artusi, ovvero delle imperfezioni della moderna musica ragionamenti due." The second part was published at Venice in 1603. It is in this work that Artusi fiercely attacks the innovations introduced by Monteverde, of which I have spoken just now. He evidently could not realise the importance of the revolution which was going on in the whole system of tonality. He looked on Monteverde's use of

unprepared dominant sevenths and ninths as unwarrantable infringements of the ancient rules of counterpoint, and attacked them accordingly. From his narrow and old-fashioned point of view he was right, no doubt. But in spite of his protests the new system triumphed, and modern music came into existence. I possess the former part of this work, and have placed it on the table. The latter part, I am sorry to say, I do not possess. Artusi's subsequent publications consist of a defence of Vincenzo Lusitano against Vicentino and others; and a critical work on Zarlino's celebrated treatises, published in 1604; and a work entitled "Considerazioni Musicali," printed at Venice in 1607. These works I have never seen. The next author whom I would name is *Orazio Tigrini*, a Canon of Arezzo. I have been unable to ascertain the date of his birth and death. In 1588 he published a good treatise on counterpoint, "Il Compendio della Musica" (quarto, Venice), of which a second edition came out in 1602. My copy, which I have brought here, is of the second edition. It is a well-arranged book, partly condensed from Zarlino and Gaffurius, but containing no new ideas. Tigrini also composed some good madrigals, which were published in 1582. His treatise was used as a text-book till the very end of the last century.

The next book in chronological order which I have placed before you is a very rare and curious treatise on music written by *Giovanni d' Avella*. He was a Franciscan monk of the monastery of Terra di Lavoro, near Naples, and lived in the middle of the seventeenth century. The exact date of his birth and death are not known. He was known as a great preacher, and also as a learned musician. Indeed the treatise before us sufficiently attests his deep study of musical theory. It is called "Regole di Musica" (folio, Rome, 1657). But it not only contains musical rules, it also contains queer paragraphs about the music of the spheres, and its connection with judicial astrology. The book is, however, if not very practically useful, at any rate curious and rare, and, as my copy is a remarkably good one, I thought I had better lay it on the table with the others. The next name I have to introduce to your notice is that of a man who was celebrated in his own day and in his own country, though I suppose few people in our own times have so much as heard his name. *Giovanni Battista Doni* was a nobleman of Florence. He was born in 1593. Originally destined for the legal profession, he studied law at Bourges in the famous school of Cujacius; in 1618 the University of Pisa conferred on him the degree of doctor of laws. He studied oriental languages, classics, philosophy, and rhetoric assiduously, nor did he neglect the study of musical science. After this he accompanied Cardinal Corsini to Paris in a diplomatic capacity, and remained there about a year. There he formed a close friendship with the famous *Mersenne*, whose

treatises on music are still well known, though rarely to be met with. In 1623 he went to Rome, at the instance of Cardinal Barberini, the nephew of Pope Urban VIII. Encouraged by this cardinal, who was an enthusiastic musical amateur, Doni wrote several dissertations on musical subjects, and chiefly concerning the musical system of the ancient Greeks. He was rewarded by an appointment to the office of secretary to the College of Cardinals. He also went with Cardinal Barberini to France and Spain; and after his return to Rome he invented a new stringed instrument, which he called "Lyra Barberina ἀμφιχορδὸς." This was formed of a vertical and movable body resting on a base, and on which a multitude of strings were stretched on both sides, tuned so as to represent the different Greek systems of scales. Of this ingenious (but useless) invention he wrote a detailed account entitled "Commentarii de Lyrâ Barberinâ." This is a most learned and exhaustive treatise on ancient Greek music. It was not, however, printed till more than a century after his death, which occurred at Florence in 1647. His earliest work was his "Compendio del Trattato dei generi e modi della Musica" (Rome, 1635), a copy of which is on the table. In 1640 he also brought out a volume of annotations on the same. In 1647 he printed at Florence a remarkable work called "De Præstattiâ musicæ veteris libri tres, totidem Dialogiis comprehensi, in quibus vetus et recens musica cum singulis earum partibus accuratè inter se conferuntur." In this work Doni expends a vast amount of erudition in a vain attempt to prove how far superior the ancient Greek music was to that of his own day. But this is obviously a thing which no one can ever prove, inasmuch as we cannot tell accurately what the Greek music really sounded like; and even if this could be ascertained, we should be in no position to judge fairly of its merits. Doni also left many learned treatises behind him in MS. Of these the most important were collected and prepared for publication by the Italian antiquarian Gori, and after his death these were at length brought out at Florence in 1773, in two handsome folio volumes. My copy, which is on the table, was formerly in the library of the late learned M. de Coussemaker.

The next writer whose labours seem to deserve mention today is Professor *Lemme Rossi*, who occupied the chair of philosophy and mathematics at Perugia, in which town he was born in the year 1601. It does not appear that he was a practical musician, but he wrote a most learned treatise on the mathematical calculations incidental to music, which he published under the title of "Sistema Musico, overo Musica speculativa, dove si spiegano i più celebri sistemi di tutti i tre generi" (Perugia, 1666). Perhaps it may be said that such a work as this ought not to have been included in a series of works on music, inasmuch as it only treats of the mathe-

matical problems and speculations connected therewith. But I had a special object in showing you this book, as well as those by Doni—I wished to show how the old Boethian leaven was still at work, and that, although men were no longer content with reproducing the useless facts, figures, and reasonings of Boethius, yet they still hankered after similar speculations and calculations, although it is certain that from all their writings, and in spite of all their undoubted erudition, not one single useful discovery resulted, not a single step was made in advance, not one iota of useful information was contributed, whereby musical science and musical art were benefited. I conceive that this is partly to be accounted for by the great change which was being gradually wrought in the system of tonality, as regards practical composition, in those transitional days. The old rules were no longer sufficient —some had been practically superseded, others obviously required remodelling and supplementing, in order to bring them to bear upon the new system of composition which had come into vogue. Men found that treatises and text-books on the old lines were useless, and they had not yet sufficiently ascertained the principles of modern tonality to write new treatises and text-books to suit the new music. They were driven therefore, I suspect, to write about ancient Greek scales, or to indulge in learned mathematical calculations of ratios and proportions, in order to avoid committing themselves to the discreditable antagonism which then undoubtedly prevailed between the music of the best living composers and the rules of the old standard theorists. I conceive Doni and Rossi to have been typical men of the period in that sense; and that is why I have said more about their works than musically they deserve. Lemme Rossi died in 1673.

But it is time to hasten on to another Italian author and composer, whose works exercised no little influence on our art. *Angelo Berardi* was born in the year 1648, or thereabouts. He was Maestro di Capella first at the Cathedral of Viterbo, and then at that of Spoleto. In 1693 he was nominated to the same office in the Basilica of Santa Maria di Trastevere, in Rome. The date of his death is uncertain, but it is supposed to have taken place during the first decade of the eighteenth century. His publications were as follows: 1, "Ragionamenti Musicali" (12mo, Bologna, 1682); 2, "Documenti Armonici" (4to, Bologna, 1687); 3, "Miscellanea Musicale" (4to, Bologna, 1689); 4, "Arcani Musicali" (4to, Bologna, 1690); and 5, "Il Perchè Musicale, ovvero staffetta armonica" (4to, Bologna, 1693). As Fétis very justly remarks, "The works of Beradi form a remarkable epoch in the history of harmony. After the innovations introduced into musical tonality by Monteverde, the rigid principles of the Roman school had undergone certain modifications which, as they

daily became more marked, gave to every branch of the art, and especially to its tonality, a new direction. Nevertheless, the two brothers Nanini, Benevoli, and their pupils, although they had adopted the new harmonic forms, still preserved in their compositions something of the purity of style of which Palestrina and his contemporaries had first set the example. But at the time when Berardi published his 'Documenti Armonici' it seems as if musicians had mistaken the object of musical study. It was no longer with a view to produce elegant vocal movements and combinations that men studied music, but rather in order to produce various puerile subtleties, such as counterpoints, *alla zoppa*, *perfidiati*, *d'un sol passo*, &c., of which indeed the works of our author are full. What can be more ridiculous, more opposed to the true object of all art, than these conventional forms, wherein composers imposed on themselves arbitrary rules—to use sometimes only minims, sometimes only crotchets, or to make one part perpetually repeat one and the same phrase, while the other parts were free to follow the ordinary rules of harmony; or else forbid themselves the use of certain notes or intervals? And yet it is precisely of such things as these that Berardi gives us the rules, in all seriousness. It must be confessed, nevertheless, that these faults, which belong to the times in which he lived, are redeemed by the information to be obtained from his works concerning two important matters connected with the art of writing music—matters which have exercised a most happy influence on the progress of modern music. The former of these is *double counterpoint*, which, although it existed long before (being indicated by Zarlino and developed by Cerone), had never before been brought to the perfection in which it appears in the works of Berardi. The latter of these is the art of conducting a fugue by means of a *tonal* answer to the subject, an invention which substituted tonal and free fugues for real and canonical ones. I do not say that Berardi was the first inventor of these matters, but he is the first who explained their principles and rules in a methodical manner. On this ground, then, he should be regarded as a writer whose works have been of the greatest importance in the history of the art." In all this criticism I entirely concur. The volume on the table contains two of Berardi's works, the "Documenti Armonici" and his "Il Perchè Musicale."

Hitherto I have confined myself to Italian authors: now two Spaniards come before us. *Andres Lorente*, a celebrated Spanish theorist, was born at Archuelo, near Toledo, in 1631, and graduated in arts at the University of Alcalà. He became Commissary of the Inquisition at Toledo, and Prebendary of Alcalà de Henares, and to these dignities he joined the office of organist to the church of St. Justus in that city. He was evidently a sound and learned musician, and not only a good theorist, but

one who was well acquainted with the practice of his art. The date of his death is uncertain. His great treatise, on which his fame is mainly built, is called "El Porque della Música," a copy of which is on the table. It was published at Alcalà de Henares in the year 1672. It is really a useful book, logically divided, and well reasoned, and the examples it contains are very well written. It is indeed a great pity that so few old Spanish works on music have come down to us, for the few that we have are most valuable, as throwing considerable light on the history and progress of the art in Spain. I will, however, adduce one more author to-day, of whose writings I can show you two specimens. *Pablo Nassarre*, a Franciscan monk, and organist of the great Franciscan Monastery at Saragossa, was born in 1664, but the date of his death is not known. In 1693 he published at Saragossa an elementary treatise, in form of dialogue, of which the title is "Fragmentos Músicos," of which a second edition came out in 1700, with additions and improvements by Don José de Torres, organist of the Chapel Royal at Madrid. My copy is of this second edition; the first I have never seen. The work is not of much value, inasmuch as it is little more than a translation of an Italian work by Ponzio, itself a mere extract from Zarlino. Nassarre, however, some twenty-five years later, brought out a much more important work in two volumes folio: "Escuela Música segun la Practica Moderna" (Zaragosa, 1723-24). This is really a complete system of music, of a most compendious kind. It includes the production of sound, the structure of various musical instruments, ecclesiastical plain-song, mensurable music, harmonic proportions of intervals, consonances and dissonances, counterpoint of all kinds, different styles of composition, and many useful and practical rules concerning the execution of music. In fact, it is a most admirable and well-arranged compendium of music, including the modern system of tonality, and accounting for every practical rule on philosophical principles. Unfortunately it is an excessively rare work. I have never met with any mention of it in any catalogue of musical libraries, or great sales of music, nor have I ever seen any other copy but the one now before you. Indeed, it has only been known to collectors and bibliographers from the reference to it in Yriarte's celebrated poem in praise of music. Carl Ferdinand Becker, in his "Musikalischen Literatur" (Leipzig, 1836), could only refer to it in that poem. Fétis alone mentions it as having seen a copy and examined it. The rarity of the book may probably be owing to the fact that it contains certain passages which fell under the condemnation of the Inquisition, as was stated on the original vellum cover, in French, before the book was rebound.

And here I had intended to conclude my paper, as we have got fairly to the end of the seventeenth century. But I have in my

possession one very rare and curious book, which is not indeed exactly a treatise on music, but rather a series of examples of organ music. It is, however, so singular as to its method of notation that I cannot refrain from introducing it to your notice. It is the "Libro de Tientos y Discursos de Música Practica y Theorica de Organo, intitulad Facultad Organica"; the author's name is *Don Francisco Correa de Arauxo*, and the work was published at Alcalà in 1626. The date of the writer's birth is not certainly known, but at the time he wrote his book he was organist of the church of St. Salvador at Seville, and Rector of the College of Priests in that city. Then he became a Professor at Salamanca, and ultimately Bishop of Segovia. He died in 1663. There is some doubt as to whether he was a Spaniard or a Portuguese by birth. Eslava claims him as a native of Spain, while Vasconcillos gives weighty reasons for considering him a Portuguese. The great peculiarity of his work, and the reason which induced me to bring it here to-day, is the fact that it is printed in a curious sort of notation, wherein lines represent the note C in each octave, while the numbers 2, 3, 4, &c., signify the other notes of the scale, counting upwards from C. I have now reached the end of my specimens. Although it may be thought that they do not present so many points of artistic interest as did the works on which my former paper was based, yet I hope they have not been altogether uninteresting. They fairly represent the progress and development of the Art and Science of Music in Italy and Spain during the seventeenth century. After that date other countries took a more active part in the scene. Treatises in French, German, and English, disputed the supremacy with those of Italy, and at length Germany rose to the position she still occupies in the forefront of musical progress. Still, during the earlier part of the eighteenth century such authors as Tartini, Pizzati, Mancini, Bianchini, Bononcini, Gasparini, and Tevo, followed by such men as Vallotti, Martini, and Paolucci, sufficiently prove that Italy had as yet lost none of her old powers as a teacher of art, while Spain produced such men as Eximeno, Bails, and Montanos. So that it would take a large volume to carry on the history of musical literature beyond the time to which I have brought it in this paper. I will therefore now conclude, with the expression of my earnest hope that some at least of the matters on which I have touched may have been new and interesting to some of my audience.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN.—I am sure there can be but one feeling amongst the members present this evening, and that is of gratitude to our President for the very admirable paper he has given us. It has afforded us a great deal of information upon a topic on which, speaking for myself, I know very little, and I dare say that is true of many of us. The first thing we owe him is to return him our cordial thanks for the splendid paper he has given us, and my next duty is to invite any remarks from any one who may wish to ask for information, or add anything in elucidation of the subject Sir Frederick has so ably brought before us.

The vote of thanks was carried by acclamation.

Professor MACFARREN.—I cannot resist the temptation of speaking in fellowship with our distinguished President. I consider it a high privilege to have the opportunity of joining voice with so eminent an authority on these highly important and interesting matters. I can, I think, fortunately throw a gleam of light on the most interesting point of his discourse, which I must refer to the lantern from which I received it, namely, Mr. William Chappell, that is the discovery—for one can hardly call it an invention, since it is the probing of one of the phenomena of nature, and that phenomenon of all others which establishes music as one of the natural sciences, as well as one of the most beautiful arts—the phenomenon of the chord of the dominant seventh. It has been the use of historians to ascribe that entirely to Monteverde, but the chord is to be found in the composition of a native of Lorraine, Jean Mouton, who lived about one hundred years before Monteverde. Some extracts which have been shown me have this chord of the dominant seventh written with all the freedom and with all the beauty of effect that the writers derive from it and give to it in compositions of the present day. That composer was of general note, but he was not so well-known as a musical writer as a writer on music, and that may perhaps be the reason why he has been overlooked by persons who have chronicled the history of this wonderful natural demonstration of harmony; but certainly Monteverde wrote not more freely, and we write not more freely, than the examples which have been shown me of the still earlier use of the chord in question. That Monteverde was opposed, and that he defended himself, have been reasons, doubtless, for bringing his name into conspicuous prominence; but I think it takes nothing from his credit, at any rate, that another musician had earlier made the same happy combination of sounds. So far as I can learn in the history of science, no discovery has ever been onefold; it has

always been the case that several explorers in about the same period have divined the same fact, and, whether simultaneously or in immediate succession, they have brought it to light; and their almost contemporaneous fortune in writing upon such wonders serves not so much to make antagonism between them as to give confirmation in the works of one, of the views of the former. Another thing which is of great importance, which belongs also to the seventeenth century—I think the date was 1676—is that two Oxford scholars, without communication with each other, lighted on that grand fact which explains this chord of the dominant seventh, and translates it from a piece of empiricism into the really natural fact and wonderful phenomenon that we find it. One was William Noble, of Merton College, and the other was Thomas Pigot, of Wadham College. They discovered that one sound generated others, and that the successively generated sounds built up the very chord of the dominant seventh; and the fact that the notes of this chord are thus generated is the solution of the contradictory effect of this to the rules of the earlier contrapuntists—that no discord could be tolerated except its harshness were mollified by preparation. As the seventh note is generated harmonically by the fundamental sound, it is truly prepared in nature, and our articulating this note in performance by voice or instrument is only making a little stronger that sound which already exists where the generator is given to produce it. Evidently the true basis of the harmonic theory of the present period is that this is a natural and not an artificial combination of sounds, and I think it is a great glory to our country that that discovery was made here, and was made all but simultaneously by two persons who were resident in the same locality, and not in communication with each other. It is one of the many glories of the University of which our President is the shining ornament of musical light at the present moment, that this discovery was made in Oxford. The names of the authors we have heard will serve as an index to their works, and I can answer for one listener to the paper who will take what opportunities fortune may place in his way to trace the theories of the writers who have been placed before us. It is of great consequence for the history of music that we should know through what curious trammels of ingenious complication persons laboured for centuries before they lighted on the real groundwork of musical nature—the matter which makes it not calculation, but science; not mathematics, but the absolute expression of the principle which may be said to rule the universe. I will give you an expression which I heard from Dr. von Bulow, which I feel to convey a grand truth, and in most poetical terseness: "Rhythm," said he, "was the annihilation of chaos." Rhythm I understand to mean

the periodic accentuation of sound; and this periodic accentuation by regular vibration at stated moments is what constitutes the difference between musical sound and noise. It is this principle of periodic vibration which keeps the planets in their places, which regulates all the motions wherewith philosophy has made the world acquainted, and which symbolises all truth in the production of musical sound, which is the continuous repetition of these periodic vibrations; and from this system of rhythm is evolved the harmonic scale, in which harmonic scale is comprised that chord of the dominant seventh and the whole series of fundamental harmonies; and to this is due the entire system of modern music, of which Sir Frederick has given a proof, and of the very highest importance with reference to musical art.

The Rev. T. HELMORE.—Will you allow me to add to what has been so eloquently spoken by the Professor of Cambridge that the vibrations of light are, of course, very similar to those of sound, and that the first thing which God created was light.

Dr. STAINER said he recollected sitting up very late one night with Sir Frederick Ouseley, translating a portion of one of the books now on the table.

Sir F. G. OUSELEY.—I think I have read through every one of the books I have put on the table.

The CHAIRMAN.—Do you think it possible that it is a misprint in the case of Nassarre, the second volume being printed before the first.

Sir F. G. OUSELEY.—I do not know, but the fact is so.

The CHAIRMAN.—Such a thing occurs in one of our old prints, "Morley's Music Companion."

Sir F. G. OUSELEY.—I know no more than I have said. I should be very glad if anybody could throw a light upon it.

Dr. BRIDGE.—Can you tell me whether there is a copy of Berardi in the Museum?

Sir F. G. OUSELEY.—I do not know, it is a very uncommon book.

Dr. BRIDGE.—It is a very interesting book, this; it is a pity we cannot in some way or other reproduce some of the most interesting extracts from some of these curious books. If we could get some machinery in motion in connection with this Association whereby, if Sir Frederick or others who know these valuable works would allow us, to cull the sweets from them, and put them before our members, it would be very useful. I should have been only too delighted to have had such a book to refer to when I was engaged on a primer. I am full of apprehension when I look at it in case what I have said can be disproved by this book. I only hope Sir Frederick Ouseley will keep it entirely to himself, or else let me have an opportunity of examining it and correcting myself before anybody else does.

Sir F. G. OUSELEY.—If you like to pay me a visit where the book lives you shall have an opportunity of examining it all day, and all night too, if you like.

Dr. STAINER.—Can you give us any information as to who began to call the dominant discords fundamentals? Was that an Italian name given to them? I have never been able to trace that.

Sir F. G. OUSELEY.—I think not. I speak under correction, but I rather think the first man who used the word "fundamental" was Logier.

Dr. POLE.—Rameau speaks of a *basse fondamentale.*

Dr. STAINER.—That was applied to all sorts of chords on all degrees of the scale.

Mr. STEPHENS.—That was the lowest note of the chord.

Dr. BRIDGE.—I should also like to ask Sir Frederick Ouseley whether there are any English works on theory of importance, which are contemporaneous with those he has brought before us this afternoon?

Sir F. G. OUSELEY.—Yes; there is Morley's book and Christopher Simpson's book.

The CHAIRMAN.—And Dr. Flud's.

Sir F. G. OUSELEY.—That is a repetition very much of Boethius.

Dr. BRIDGE.—A book was lent me some time ago, which I returned, by Butler, of Magdalen College—a most valuable and interesting book, and there is one point in it to which my attention was called particularly, in connection with the subject of canons. I was looking at that book of Berardi's to see if he had any observation on that point. Butler explained the original term canon in a very clear way; he also terms a canon *fuga legata.*

Sir F. G. OUSELEY.—That is the old name for it.

Dr. BRIDGE.—He explains the origin of it—that this is a fettered fugue which was preceded by a real canon.

Sir F. G. OUSELEY.—The old fugues were really canons; the words at one time were almost synonymous.

Dr. BRIDGE.—That is no doubt the reason of it—that is a sentence preceding the fettered fugue; I thought it extremely interesting. That was published in 1636, if I remember rightly.

Mr. W. CHAPPELL.—I should like to say a few words upon the practice of composing one form of canon in England—I mean the round. It is at least as early as the first half of the thirteenth century, when "Summer is a-coming in," was written; but it may perhaps be traced to a still earlier period, because Anglo-Saxon monks were not only censured for "velocity" in singing, but also for "breaking up and dividing their song by a method of *figurate descant*, in which the various voices, *following one another*, were perpetually repeating different

words at the same time." This description seems only applicable to canon in unison, or singing rounds. Leaving the origin of the custom for further investigation, we may say, without hesitation, that it was a well-known system of making harmony in the thirteenth century, and that the first recorded pun upon musical terms is upon the identity of canon in unison with round. In reading over the Latin songs and poems which follow "Summer is icumen in" in the manuscript, I found a punning satire upon avaricious men (*Contra Avaros*), and one especially reprehending the corruptions of the Court of Rome at that time. It begins on the reverse of folio 105. At line 61, the writer says:—

> Coram cardinalibus et coram patriarca,
> Libra libros, reos res, Marcum vincit marca.

Here, within one line, are three puns, of which two are lost in translation. The "libra libros" argues the power of gold over books of authority; the "reos res" the escape of the guilty by paying money, and the third is that Saint Mark must yield to the coined mark. Then, at lines 69-72:—

> Commissus notario, munera suffunde;
> Statim causæ subtrahet quando, cur, et unde,
> Et formæ subjiciet canones rotundæ.

Thus he puns upon the canons of the Church as if they were canons in music, and he finds a fourth simile for money as the Round. "When you are turned over to the notary," says the writer, "pour in your bribes; he will at once extricate you from your cause—when, why, or whence it may arise—and turn all the Canons into Rounds." This is so purely a musical pun that it has hitherto escaped notice. Few general readers would know that the round was one form of canon; and I was pleased to find it in a manuscript which includes the earliest extant specimen of that kind of composition.

The CHAIRMAN.—The date of "Summer is icumen in" is 1240, I think.

Mr. W. CHAPPELL.—Yes, not later; indeed there is a probability that the writer died in that year, because his handwriting is not seen in the manuscript after that date, nor in the old cartulary of the Abbey of Reading, which he also kept. His latest entry which bears a date is in the calendar of the latter, where he records the death of Abbot Adam (de Latebury), on April 6, 1238. The scribe was undoubtedly a monk of the famous Abbey of Reading, in Berkshire, founded, or refounded, by Henry I. The calendar in the cartulary is complete, but in the little volume of poetry and music is only written up to February, and on January 19, Saint Wulstan's day, it contains the following peculiar entry: "Ora, Wulstane, pro nostro fratre, Johanne de Fornsete." The

introduction of this monk's name into the one calendar is not to be accounted for upon any other supposition than that John of Forncett, the monk of Reading, was the writer of the book. Forncett is in Norfolk, not very distant from Norwich, on the road to London. It now boasts of a railway-station.

Professor MACFARREN.—I should like to state here, what is at any rate my belief, that the first person who used this term "fundamental discords" was my deceased friend Alfred Day. I remember the great familiarity with which he used to employ the expression in our conversations with each other, and so familar was it then that it seemed in my recollection to be part of general language; but since my attention has been called to it by Mr. Prout, I have passed as rapidly as might be in the midst of the very interesting information we have been receiving over the former period of my intercourse with him, and my impression is certainly very strong that he was the person who first used that as a theoretical term. It would be very inapplicable to the theory of Logier, because the description of harmony which he gives does not refer to fundamental discords in the sense in which they are now understood, insomuch so that he numbers as 9, 11, and 13 the intervals over a pedal bass, but the notes which are derived from that bass as a root—namely, in the key of C, having the dominant chord upon the C, which included the notes D, F, and B—he would call that the chord of the 9th, 11th, and 7th of C, which, of course, is the chord of G with C taken for its bass note. If Logier did use the term fundamental—and I read his book not very long ago, and I cannot recollect that it was not used therein—it certainly would be applied in a different sense.

Sir F. G. OUSELEY.—I may state with regard to that, although Logier used the word "generator" for the root rather, I remember when he was giving lessons to my eldest sister, who was a pupil of his, the words "fundamental bass" being used to express what we should now express by them. I have a somewhat indistinct recollection of the word being continually used during a lesson which he was giving to my sister; that was about the year 1833 or so.

Professor MACFARREN.—Then that goes earlier than my date; and you will forgive me for having questioned what you said. May I make one more remark? We are informed with very great pertinence to the subject that light was the first incident of Creation, and that the vibrations of light correspond with the vibrations of sound. If the vibrations of light were the first things which were created, the vibrations of sound were the first discovered. It was Dr. Young, the Professor of the Royal Institution in Albemarle Street, who made his discovery of the wave theory of sound; and the theory of light, which suggests a very strong correspondence with it, was really suggested by this sound theory, and thus human

priority, at any rate, belongs to sound, and light comes to hold up her train, and shows the wonders of the vibrations of her strings.

The CHAIRMAN.—It is now my duty, occupying the position I do to-day by your courtesy, just to speak a few words in concluding the discussion. There is very little for me to say, except to point out to you, as probably some of you know well, and as I know very well indeed, that these books are extremely rare. Seeing old books so constantly as I do, and having had a great deal to do with the Caxton Exhibition, where we got together all the treatises that could be found, I may state that several of these put in no appearance there; and, with regard to one or two, I do not know of any other copies. We are therefore extremely indebted to Sir Frederick for bringing them all the way from Tenbury, for those who are book-lovers know how very great and tender is the affection a man has for treasures of this kind, and how loth he is to have them handled by any but experts. I think you will agree that this has been a very interesting afternoon. I am glad to have had such a full meeting, and I am sure we shall be only too glad to welcome Sir Frederick here on another occasion, when he will be able to continue this subject, or open up a fresh one for us. It is a great satisfaction to have the Professors of both Universities here to-day. It is a privilege we do not often get, therefore we value it the more. I was glad to hear the Professor of Cambridge refer to the discovery of the seventh, or rather the use of it, by Mouton; and I remember Mr. Chappell wrote to me about two years ago a note of that fact, and I think it a very remarkable thing. I think it is very interesting to show how musical historians do make slips like other folks, and need to be corrected by the light of discovery. I have only now to thank Sir Frederick once more for his great kindness in attending here.

Mr. W. CHAPPELL.—Will you allow me to mention just one word on a matter of interest? We have been speaking of "Summer is a-coming in." Mr. Cummings well knows a manuscript in the British Museum of the same century, and within a few years of the same date, which contains not only the "Angelus ad Virginem" mentioned by Chaucer, but there are several pieces of music in one, two, and three parts. It is the Arundel Manuscript, No. 248. It belonged to the Royal Society, and was overlooked, because men of science do not care to read works of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Sir F. G. OUSELEY then proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which terminated the proceedings.

March 6, 1882.

G. A. MACFARREN, Esq., M.A., Mus. Doc., Cantab.,

In the Chair.

CONSECUTIVE FIFTHS.

By F. E. Gladstone, Esq., Mus. Doc., Cantab.

When first I was honoured by an invitation to read a paper before this Association, I shrank from the undertaking, because of the difficulty of selecting a topic upon which I might venture to discourse with any hope of interesting my hearers. But upon reflection it occurred to me that this was a difficulty which would certainly not decrease as time went on, and session after session witnessed the production of lectures on new subjects. Therefore when, at the beginning of the present session, I was again invited to read, I thought that my wisest course was to gather together some ideas without further delay. My subject suggested itself to me during the preparation of a paper on "Triads, their Relationship and Treatment," which I read recently before the College of Organists. The title of that paper would properly have included to a great extent the subject of the present one; but I soon found it impossible to deal with the whole question within reasonable limits, and then arose the idea of taking "consecutive fifths" as the theme for a separate paper.

My choice has, I think, been fortunate, so far as the interest attaching to the subject itself is concerned. It will be for others to determine whether I have not been overbold in attempting to open a debate upon matters which may perhaps belong as much to the science of acoustics as to the art of music. However, in the hope that what I have to say will at least help to stimulate discussion, I proceed to my task.

I should mention at the outset that it is not my intention to dwell upon the historical aspect of the subject; any one who is curious to learn when, and by whom, consecutive fifths were first prohibited, will find probably as much as is known on these points in an essay by the late Mr. De Pearsall, the well-known part-song and madrigal writer. Neither do I propose

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to offer to young students any recipe for what the elder Wesley once humorously termed "fifth catching"; the only method known to me for acquiring readiness in detecting consecutive fifths is to practise constantly both part-writing and score-reading. My object is to seek reasons for the fact that the greatest masters of our art have systematically avoided writing two perfect fifths in succession between the same two parts. I am aware, of course, that there are exceptions; and I shall presently call your attention to some of them; but these are, nevertheless, sufficiently rare to excite comment whenever they are observed, and thus to prove the rule.

Consecutive fifths may arise in a variety of ways:—

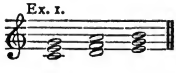
1. In the progression from one common chord to another.
2. In the progression from a common chord to what is commonly called a "fundamental discord."
3. In passing from a discord to the harmony in which it is resolved.
4. By the insertion of passing-notes, or other ornamental notes which are unessential to the harmony.

Each of these cases shall be considered in turn; and the first in the order just given is also the first in importance.

Students of harmony will, of course, be aware of the fact that fifths between one common chord and another are more likely to make their appearance when the roots are separated only by the interval of a second. When the roots are a third, fourth, or fifth apart, the chords have one or more notes in common; and then some part or parts may remain stationary, while others move.

Perhaps no explanation is more frequently offered for the disagreeable effect of consecutive fifths than that suggested by Cherubini: viz., that two parts progressing by fifths are moving in two different scales. The reason is obviously insufficient; but it has more force than some critics are willing to admit. When, for instance, three triads in succession are based upon the notes C, D, E, the first having a major third, and the other two having minor thirds, but each with a perfect fifth, it seems clear that the parts do not all progress in one scale throughout:—

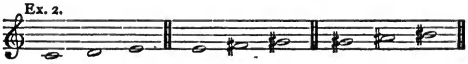
Ex. 1.



The upper parts cannot be really in the scale of C, because, as we know, neither a true fifth nor a minor third can, strictly speaking, be based upon the second degree of an accurately tuned major scale. But it may be said that the instrument upon which these chords have been played is tuned upon the system known as "equal temperament." No doubt it is. Nevertheless I contend that, as we tolerate its sharp major thirds and

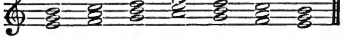
flat fifths, knowing and feeling them to be substitutes for the true thirds and fifths of the genuine scale, so we are accustomed to accept other divisions of the scale, not for what they actually are, but for what they represent. The following progression—

Ex. 2.



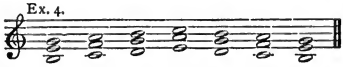
played on the pianoforte keyboard, ends at the distance of an octave from the starting point; but, unless the impression produced upon my mind is unlike that which others receive, I think it will be generally admitted that, in spite of equal temperament, the final note presents itself to our hearing faculties as the representative of a flatter sound than C.* To me, therefore, it does not seem unreasonable to argue that even with the pianoforte we recognise the equivocal nature of such a progression as that contained in my first example. But, even after this has been granted, the argument that consecutive fifths cause two parts to move in different scales cannot be carried much further. The triads on the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth degrees are all perfectly in tune in the scale of just intonation. Some further reason, therefore, must be sought for the unquestionably ugly result produced when these chords are taken in regular rotation, either ascending or descending:—

Ex. 3.



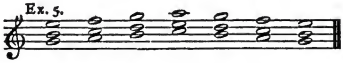
There is no doubt much difficulty attending this search, but the pursuit of it has convinced me of the significance of one fact: viz., that consecutive fifths are generally more or less offensive in proportion to the want of relationship, or otherwise, existing between the chords which produce them; and it is plain that, when a series of fifths and thirds is based upon successive notes of the scale, there is no direct relationship between any two neighbouring chords. It may be urged, however, that the progression by diatonic steps is not found unpleasant in the case of inverted chords, although there is no closer connection between the roots than before. This is undoubtedly true of *first* inversions; but I would ask you to observe that a similar series of *second* inversions is almost (if not quite) as bad as when the chords are in their original position:—

Ex. 4.



* Further interesting proofs of this habit which we have of mentally adjusting the imperfections of tuning, are given in Professor Macfarren's well-known "Lectures on Harmony."

And it is not until the root is placed at the top of the combination of sounds that the effect is at all satisfactory:—



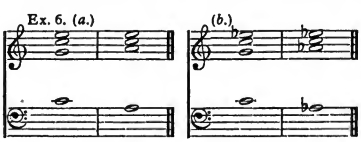
Helmholtz suggests a cause for this discrepancy in the case of two *major* chords in their inverted positions: viz., that inasmuch as chords in the second inversion may be taken to represent the third, fourth, and fifth harmonies of a compound tone, the influence of the root is more strongly felt than when the combination of sounds can only be compared to the fifth, sixth, and eighth harmonies united. This argument, however, will not apply to minor chords; and I have sometimes indulged in speculations as to whether combinational tones can have any important bearing upon the matter. This is a question for acousticians to decide. Still, whatever the reason may be, the fact remains that chords in their first inversion, particularly *minor* chords, have a less definite tonal character than either the first position or the second inversion of the same chords would possess.

Kollmann seems to have been the first writer who propounded the idea that the effect of fifths largely depends upon the relative position of the chords in which they occur. Amongst others who have in one form or another adopted this view is Dr. Henry Hiles, who, in his "Grammar of Music," makes some interesting remarks. Speaking of the progression from the fifth of the subdominant to that of the dominant in the major scale, he says: "The first and second notes of each part are discordant. But the discordancy of the progression in the treble, or of that in the bass, would not, separately, be of material consequence. When, however, the two discordancies are combined, a much more than double harshness results; because the effect of a sound is intensified by the addition of its fifth above or below, . . . and the antagonism of the completed triads is intensified by the great discordancy of the fourth and seventh of the scale—the root of one chord and the third of the other—which form the worst interval the major diatonic scale contains." There is, I think, no little force in these remarks. But it seems desirable to add something to them; for, even when the upper parts move in an opposite direction to the bass, the tritone is still there, and so also are the fifths, although these are not now both in the same part. The point which must not escape our observation is this: when common chords occur on successive degrees of the ascending scale, their want of affinity is brought into prominence by parallel movement between the parts, for parallel lines never meet; whereas contrary motion causes the parts to approach each other, and so raises the expectation that they

will eventually unite in forming a harmony to which the previous chords are related. The case of fifths occurring in the descending scale is somewhat different, because contrary motion causes the parts to separate more widely; but even then the independent action of the higher parts withdraws our attention from whatever abruptness there may be in the succession of chords, because it gives us the impression that, instead of wandering aimlessly in parallel lines, the parts are striving for harmonious progression. Let me now proceed to the consideration of consecutive fifths contained in common chords which *are* nearly related.

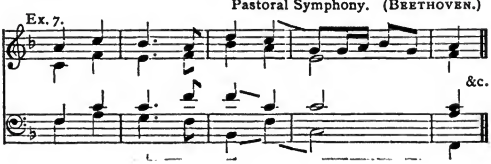
The nearest possible relationship between one chord and another is universally allowed to be that in which the root of one is the same note as the fifth of the other, or *vice versâ;* and the next is when the root of the first becomes the third of the second. The former connection exists between the chords on the dominant and tonic of a key, or between those on the subdominant and tonic. The relationship established by the root of one chord becoming the third of another is most strongly exhibited when the tonic chord is followed by the chord on the submediant of a key. In the major key this last-named chord is minor, and in the minor key it is major; but it should be observed that in both cases it contains the characteristic elements of the tonic chord. An example will make my meaning more clear. If the chord of C major is followed by the chord of A minor, or if the chord of C minor is succeeded by that of A flat major, the second chord in each case retains the two notes (the first and third of the scale) which characterise the key, or, perhaps I should rather say, which determine the mode:—

Ex. 6. (*a.*) (*b.*)



Now, of the various exceptions which the great composers have made to their rule of avoiding consecutive fifths, none are more common than those in which the progression is either from the tonic to the dominant, from the tonic to the subdominant, or the reverse of either. Two familiar examples may be quoted:—

Ex. 7. Pastoral Symphony. (BEETHOVEN.)



Ex. 8. "Sleepers, wake!" *St. Paul.* (MENDELSSOHN.)

&c.

It should be noted, however, that, when the motion is similar in direction, the skip of a fifth in each part is more disagreeable than that of a fourth :—

Ex. 9. (*a.*) (*b.*) (*c.*) (*d.*)

This may be because in one case the lowest and highest notes form the dissonant interval of a ninth, whereas in the other they are an octave apart.

But at least two illustrious composers have written fifths between the tonic and the submediant of a scale—

Ex. 10. Symphony in C, No. 6. (MOZART, Op. 34.)

&c.

Ex. 11. Symphony in B♭. (SCHUMANN.)
Trio I. *Molto più vivace.*

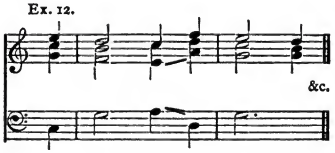
Strings. *Wind.* &c.

and, although such passages are rare, the fact that they *do* occur seems to strengthen the opinion that a near relationship between two chords will sometimes justify progressions which are usually thought undesirable.

I have not met with any specimens of consecutive fifths in which the roots of the chords *rise* a third (except where a sudden change of key occurs); and this may perhaps be explained by the fact that the relationship in such cases is less close. If, for instance, we proceed from the chord of A minor to that of C major, the characteristic interval formed by A and C is absent from the second chord, and therefore the connection is not so obvious as when the chords appear in reversed order.

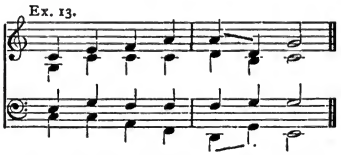
The late Sir John Goss, in his treatise on harmony, mentioned the progression from the fifth on the submediant of a major scale to that on the supertonic as among the exceptionally allowable instances of consecutives; but he considered it best that these should occur by contrary motion, and not between outside parts:—

Ex. 12.



To all appearance the relationship existing between these chords is similar to that between the tonic and subdominant (the root of the first chord being the fifth of the second); but it must not be forgotten that the supertonic triad has a flat fifth in the true scale, and possibly this may help to account for the good effect of the passage quoted. This same chord on the supertonic, when it is followed by dominant harmony, may also produce fifths which are tolerable—

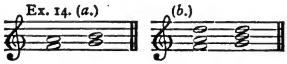
Ex. 13.



but, to my ear, the effect is bad unless the part containing the upper note afterwards rises to the fifth of the tonic (as shown in my illustration), the progression thus bringing about the eventual resolution of what I cannot but regard as a dissonance. But, in dealing with the movements of common chords, the contrapuntal aspect of the question must not be overlooked. Artistic as well as scientific considerations have a claim to our regard. The older contrapuntists wisely endeavoured always to obtain independent and contrasted movements in polyphonic composition; and consecutive fifths, like octaves, have a tendency to destroy the individuality of the parts which produce them.

The objection may be raised that this argument ought also to apply to fourths, thirds, and sixths. In reply to this I would again remind you that the movement of fourths *is* placed under various restrictions by the laws of counterpoint, and it must also be remarked that even two major thirds in succession are still forbidden in the strictest style of two-part writing—at all events when they are separated by a wider

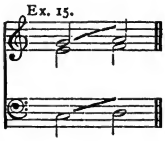
interval than a semitone. It appears, in fact, to be generally acknowledged that when consecutive major thirds occur the addition of another part is desirable, in order to define and connect the harmony :—



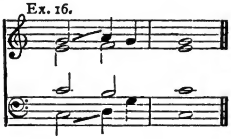
We must remember, moreover, that in the diatonic scale we never find *more* than two thirds of similar quality in immediate succession ; so that we are less liable to write consecutive equal thirds than consecutive perfect fifths or fourths. This consideration will apply also to sixths, which are, of course, inverted thirds.

I now pass to an examination of certain fifths which may arise in proceeding from a concord to a discord.

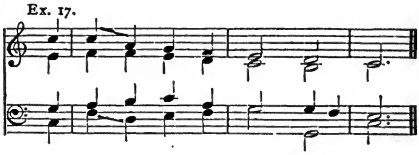
Probably no one will dispute my statement that similar motion from a tonic major triad to a minor triad on the supertonic produces a very rough effect :—



If, however, we add an inner part to the harmony, converting the second chord into a dominant discord, the harshness is strangely mitigated :—



And, again, if the same fifth (viz., that on the supertonic) is approached from the fifth on the subdominant, the B natural added to the harmony seems to exercise a softening influence :—

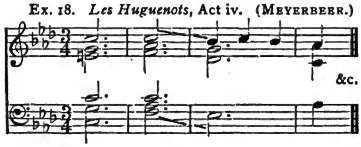


A full investigation of the cause of this phenomenon would necessitate a discussion of conflicting theories in regard to

modern harmony. To begin with, we should have to decide whether the chord of the dominant major ninth is a combination of sounds derived from the harmonic series arising from a given note, or whether it is merely a building of third upon third in the diatonic major scale. In the former case the interval between the fifth of the dominant and its ninth is theoretically a true fifth; in the latter case it remains imperfect. Such a discussion as this would lead us away from the subject with which we are more immediately concerned; but I will stop to point out that in the examples which I have quoted, the presence of the B natural at all events clearly defines the tonality, and thus establishes between the successive chords a bond of union which was not previously apparent.

I will next direct your attention to a pair of fifths (the second fifth being part of a dominant discord) which are written in such a way as to leave no room for doubt that both are true fifths:—

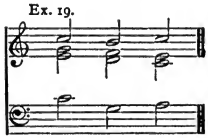
Ex. 18. *Les Huguenots*, Act iv. (MEYERBEER.)



On the first glance this consecution seems to throw all theories to the winds; but a moment's thought will enable us to find some justification for it.

A short time since I remarked upon the intimate relationship existing between a tonic chord and that upon the sixth of the scale. Let me add a word or two to make my meaning, if possible, still more evident. The resolution of a dominant seventh upon the common chord of the submediant of a key is one of the most familiar progressions in modern music:—

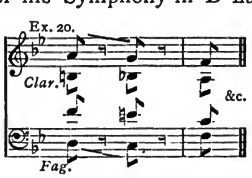
Ex. 19.



The three upper parts in the illustration just given make precisely the same movements as they would do if the bass of the last chord were C, and the chord of A minor here gives the impression less of a minor chord than of a chord substituted for the major chord upon the tonic root. If we now refer to Example 18 we shall see that the passage contains similar chords in reversed order. I do not say that

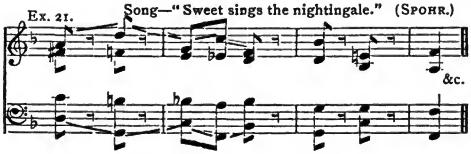
the progression is equally commendable for ordinary purposes; but the fact that the notes A flat and C are at the top of the harmony gives prominence to the interval which they form, and this interval thus serves as a strong connecting link with the dominant harmony in the key of A flat.

My next step is to the consideration of fifths formed in passing from a chord containing a dissonance to the chord which supplies its resolution. If you will glance again at Example 16, and imagine the order of the first chords to be reversed, you will perceive that the softening influence of the B natural no longer prevails. The fifths are now decidedly unsatisfactory, in spite of the relationship which connects the chords. Here, however, the accepted rule for the resolution of discords affords, I believe, an explanation of the apparent inconsistency. In addressing an assembly of musicians I need do no more than refer to the magnetic influence created whenever two notes which form a dissonance are sounded together. When, for instance, the interval of a diminished fifth is formed, the two notes are attracted towards the consonant interval which lies between them. Now in the case in point, whatever theory of harmony we may adopt—*i.e.*, whether the ninth from the root is or is not regarded, as in actual fact, dissonant with the fifth, it is certainly dissonant with the dominant triad, of which the fifth is a conspicuous element. Thus both the notes are drawn towards the consonance of a third, which is at hand, and no other progression is so natural. When, however, the former of the two chords now under consideration appears as a chromatic chord, resolving upon a dominant seventh in the key of F, the effect of the fifths is perhaps less offensive. This progression has actually been written by Schumann in the first Allegro of his Symphony in B flat:—



Its justification may probably be found in the fact that a choice of evils was before the composer, who had either to spoil the progression of the upper parts, omit the root of the dominant harmony altogether, or place it in the bass. I am nevertheless obliged in candour to confess that these fifths do not give me entire satisfaction. This is, of course, a matter of opinion in which every one will not agree with me. But I think there will be no dispute as to the absolute beauty of the series of chords contained in my next illustration:—

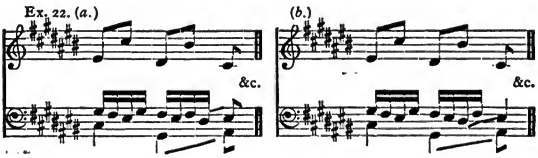
Ex. 21. Song—"Sweet sings the nightingale." (SPOHR.)



Here it will be noticed that, although the relationship of roots is the same as in the last example, neither of the notes forming the fifth is in this case dissonant with its root. The succession of chords is, in fact, similar to those given in Examples 7 and 8, with the addition, however, of the chromatic inner parts which lend so great a charm to this passage.

A curious consecution of fifths is to be found in Bach's Fugue in C sharp major (No. 3 of the Forty-eight). The passage is variously given in different editions—

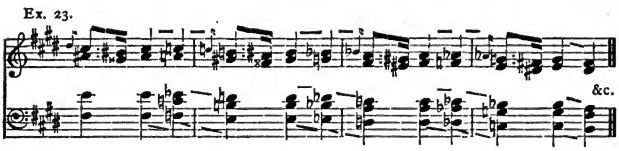
Ex. 22. (*a.*) (*b.*)



but the fifths are scarcely saved in the latter case, and the former reading is probably to be preferred, because it retains intact the counter-subject which has been used throughout the fugue. Such progressions are rare indeed in Bach; but it is difficult to see how this passage could be altered without spoiling it. It should be observed that the succession of chords is just the reverse of that quoted from Meyerbeer (Example 18).

But I have never met with so curious a series of fifths as that which is to be found in Chopin's Mazurka, Op. 30, No. 4:—

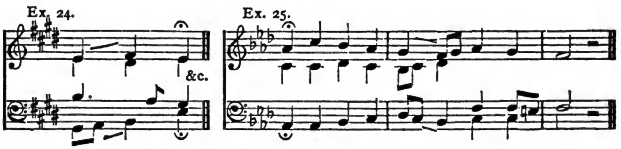
Ex. 23.



Individual tastes may differ as to the pleasurable effect of this strange passage; but it may at least be supposed that if so sensitive a temperament as the composer is said to have possessed allowed him to admire this series of chords, some other musicians may be found to view the progression with approval. It is right to mention here that some writers see no objection to the consecutive fifths produced by resolving

the so-called "German sixth" directly upon the dominant chord. This again is a matter upon which diversity of opinion will exist.

I have lastly to remark upon the effect of fifths produced by notes which are unessential to the harmony. Perhaps no instances will be more familiar to my hearers than those contained in the following two extracts from Mendelssohn's "St. Paul":—



These examples are certainly open to criticism from the contrapuntist's point of view, for reasons which have been already given. But it may be conceded that the forbidden progressions are partially concealed in both cases by the contrary motion of a prominent inner part. I say "*partially* concealed," because I cannot honestly feel that such passages as those now under consideration are so admirable that they may be safely held up to students as models for imitation. In making this avowal I trust I may escape a charge of irreverence. I have long been an ardent admirer of Mendelssohn's works; and it seems to me possible to remain so without, on that account, becoming a blind idolater of every progression which he wrote. I therefore venture to offer a reason why objection may be taken to such consecutives as those to which I have just been referring. When consecutive fifths occur through the insertion of a diatonic passing-note, they have, I think, a tendency to cause ambiguity in the harmony. An isolated fifth is so strongly suggestive of an incomplete triad that the intrusion of such an interval between two nearly related chords may to some extent destroy the connection otherwise existing.

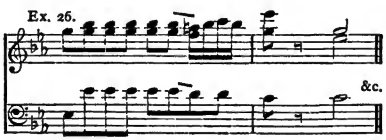
The dominant and subdominant of a key are not directly related to one another. Such connection as they have is established by their mutual relationship to the tonic. When, therefore, we proceed from the subdominant harmony to that of the dominant, a smoother result is gained by retaining the root of the first chord as the seventh of the next, thus bringing about an artificial connection between the two chords. When, however, the dominant seventh is omitted it is, as we have seen, the general practice to make the additional parts proceed, if possible, in contrary motion to the part containing the roots; and previous considerations point to the desirability of such an arrangement of the harmony.

Now in Example 24 the intended progression is plainly from

tonic to dominant harmony; but the fifth created by the appearance of A in the bass, to my mind, suggests the *sub-dominant* chord—faintly perhaps, but still with sufficient force to cloud the transparency of the harmonic relationship; and the slight indistinctness thus given to the progression is increased by the similar motion between the parts which supply the two prominent sounds of each chord: viz., the root and the fifth. Similar remarks would apply even more forcibly to Example 25. Here, however, it is worthy of observation that the intervals in question are not in reality fifths, but twelfths, and, for acoustical reasons, the difference in effect is not altogether unimportant, either in these or in other cases. If, for instance, the lower parts in the two last examples were inverted so as to produce actual fifths, the result would certainly be rougher than before.

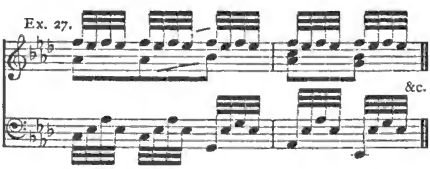
But purely ornamental notes sometimes produce consecutive fifths which are entirely unobjectionable. Let me mention, by way of illustration, a passage in Mozart's Overture to the "Magic Flute":—

Ex. 26.



And another in Beethoven's Pianoforte Sonata in A flat, Op. 26:—

Ex. 27.



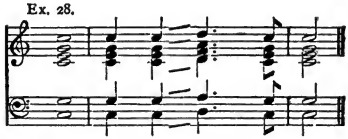
In these and similar cases the transient nature of the parallel concords explains their harmless effect. The A natural in the quotation from Mozart is merely part of an inverted turn; and the F natural in the fragment from Beethoven is only a portion of a slow shake.

I have now referred to some, at least, of the various ways in which consecutive fifths may, and do, occur. Let me sum up the result of my observations. I believe it may be stated, without much fear of contradiction, that consecutive fifths produced by two parts which move by steps of a second are always open to objection when they belong to adjacent triads in the diatonic scale; when they occur in moving from one common

chord to another which is closely related to it they may be suitable for special effects; and when they form part of a fundamental discord, or are merely the result of some melodic embellishment, they may sometimes be not merely allowable, but even beautiful—that is supposing them to be skilfully handled.

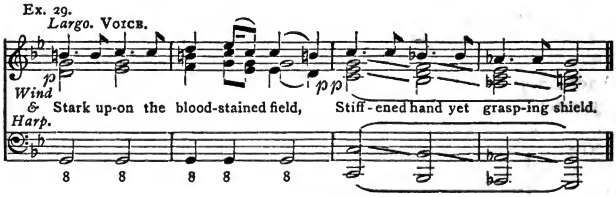
If, however, the composer desires to obtain an uncouth or quaint effect, he will find ready means for accomplishing his object by ignoring the rule which guides him under ordinary circumstances. Gounod (probably with a view towards suggesting thoughts of the old "barbarous diaphony," as Dr. Hullah calls it) has introduced into the finale of his opera "Faust" the following extraordinary passage:—

Ex. 28.



And, more recently, Mr. Prout, in his new Cantata "Alfred," has written a remarkable series of chords:—

Ex. 29.



In regard to the last example, I have the composer's own authority for saying that his purpose was to give an "appropriately *stiff* expression" to the line: "Stiffened hand yet grasping shield." But such passages are obviously most exceptional; and none but the composer of ripe experience and mature judgment can hope to use them with propriety. In ninety-nine out of every hundred cases in which consecutive fifths lie in wait for the unwary or lawless composer, a more natural and graceful progression is at hand; and, if a desire for originality (or, shall I say eccentricity?) tempts to the one, the craving of an artist for beauty and fitness of expression will usually lead to the other.

The laws laid down by contrapuntists may have been more or less empirical in the first instance; but, until some very weighty argument is advanced in favour of their revision, I am convinced that we shall do well if we study and respect those

rules which, in spite of noteworthy exceptions, have guided all the great composers who have yet lived.

Before I close I desire to say that I am indebted to my friend Mr. Prout for the discovery of several of the examples which I have placed before you. He has kindly allowed me to profit by his extensive knowledge of the literature of our art. My thanks are also due to your able and indefatigable Secretary (Mr. Higgs), who has lent me valuable aid in the preparation of the paper to which you have so indulgently listened.

DISCUSSION.

The Chairman.—The first thing I have to do, ladies and gentlemen, is to propose a hearty vote of thanks to Dr. Gladstone for the very erudite remarks with which he has favoured us, and for the fertile seed of thought which he has implanted in the minds of his hearers.

The vote of thanks was carried unanimously.

Dr. Pole remarked that the contrapuntal rule against parallel octaves and fifths had given rise to much speculation. The rule against octaves was easily explained. No one could pretend that there was anything naturally offensive in such progressions, and the objection was purely one of artistic construction. Counterpoint was essentially a combination of *different* melodies, and if in any passage the melodies moved in unisons or octaves they were no longer different, and in that passage, therefore, the essential feature of the composition failed. The rule for fifths was more obscure. Few writers on harmony had given themselves the trouble to say or to think anything about its explanation, contenting themselves with taking it for granted, as a self-evident proposition, that parallel perfect fifths were naturally repugnant to the ear. But this assertion ought not to be accepted too hastily; no physical reason had ever been discovered to justify it, and it was worthy of consideration whether, as in many analogous cases, the impression was not due more to education and habit than to any natural law. It was proverbial that "use was second nature," and the mere fact that every educated musician had been taught to abhor and avoid such progressions was sufficient to make him believe them naturally offensive, notwithstanding the total absence of any scientific evidence of the fact. Some of the more thoughtful German writers had endeavoured to establish a more legitimate reason for the rule on artistic grounds. Hauptmann appeared to consider that the parallelism of two perfect fifths was a bar to the harmonic connection of the two

chords, and Richter expressed a similar view in a different way. But some light might be thrown on the matter by a reference to the early writers; for those who first promulgated the rule might be best able to explain its motive. Such an authority was found in Zarlino, who was probably the first, after counterpoint had been well established, to reduce it to rule. In his "Istituzioni Armoniche," 1571, he says: "The most ancient composers forbade . . . two or more unisons, or octaves, or *fifths*, because they well knew that harmony should be produced from things different, and not from things similar." This made it evident that the original founders of the rule forbidding consecutive fifths based it entirely on the same ground as that forbidding octaves and unisons. They treated the fifth as only a reinforcement or strengthening of the fundamental note, and hence they considered that an accompaniment in fifths was a breach of the artistic propriety that would require independent composition. Helmholtz adopts this view, and adds that probably the rigid prohibition of fifths was a sort of reaction against the monotonous diaphony that preceded true contrapuntal writing. An intelligent view of this reasoning, while it would retain the rule in all its essential strictness, would throw much light on the manner of its adoption in modern music, and would justify many cases that would otherwise appear erroneous or doubtful.

Mr. W. H. Cummings.—Long before Zarlino spoke of consecutive fifths as a thing which ought to be forbidden an Englishman (John of Dunstable) forbade them, not because they are so objectionable, but because they are so sweet, so that the ancients could be really cloyed with the sweetness of the fifth. We know that fully to the end of the thirteenth century most of the harmony we can find consists of fifths or octaves. They found it so sweet that they thought it was time to leave it off. John of Dunstable is really the first who wrote against the use of them. Amongst the examples which probably escaped Dr. Gladstone's notice there is one in which we frequently hear the fifths, and seem to take no notice of it, though it is one which was not written by the composer—I refer to the well-known Pastoral Symphony of "The Messiah," in which, in the ninth bar, there are consecutive fifths between the instrumental parts which do not exist in the original MS. I think it is a crying shame we should have that, as it is not at all necessary. There is another example, and a very pleasing one, in Schubert's well-known song of "The Wanderer." I have brought with me, as a matter of interest, a curious case of consecutive fifths. Here is a book which Mr. Higgs mentioned on one occasion—"The Art of Fugue," by Sebastian Bach, a copy engraved by his own hand. The last fugue is left unfinished. He did not complete the engraving; it required

one note to complete the harmony, and the gentleman who kindly undertook to do that and publish it in the Nageli Edition having only one note to put in, contrived to make consecutive fifths. That is a very interesting example of how much better it is to leave a great master alone.

Mr. CHAPPELL.—All I have to say on the point is that whenever you have consecutive fifths you may always tell the natural basis of the fifth by merely taking the octave below the lower note.

Mr. CHARLES STEPHENS.—I beg to assure you I did not come here with the view of making any remarks. In the first place, I must take exception to what Dr. Pole stated as to the dislike which we feel for consecutive fifths arising from our education, because I do think that, without any education in music at all, consecutive fifths are simply hideous. I could mention a case in which they offend my ear very frequently. It is well known that stopped organ pipes have a tendency to throw off alternate harmonics, and the stopped diapason of an organ very frequently regales you with an accompaniment of the twelfth all through. I remember one organ with a stopped diapason which threw off the twelfth so terribly that I was fain to shut it in, especially when giving out a fugal subject in the lower part of the instrument. I really must take exception to the belief that consecutive fifths would have been liked if we had been educated differently. With regard to Zarlino's opinion that consecutive fifths are not allowable because the two parts are not sufficiently varied, it appears to me that the reason is not a sound one, because consecutive *thirds* and *sixths* occur continually, and are perfectly good They make, not distinctive melodies, but melodies precisely alike, yet they are not objectionable. Therefore the progression of the fifths being objectionable cannot be traced to the circumstance of their merely failing to make a separate progression. That very remarkable instance in Chopin's Mazurka has been copied by Stephen Heller in a charming little piece founded on the opera of "La Juive," where he has a series of sevenths on a chromatically descending bass. In that case it seems to me less objectionable than in the case of Chopin. There the chords are so strongly placed before you, but in the other case they come in after the fifth, sometimes, and the whole progression appears to me to be more agreeable. As regards another instance Dr. Gladstone referred to—that little extract from "To God on high"—he says the A is a passing note, and conveys the impression of the subdominant harmony. To my mind that does not appear at all, because the retention of the B in the tenor part at the same time is entirely opposed to the notion of the subdominant harmony.

Dr. GLADSTONE.—It is the effect of the dominant pedal.

Mr. STEPHENS.—The effect of a note essential to the sub-

dominant harmony—that is, the third of the chord—is altogether wanting. It appears to me that the A can only be received by the ear as a passing note; and, with the same deference really towards Mendelssohn as was shown by our worthy lecturer, I must say I do not like that progression. In the one from the "Zauberflöte" the A natural is an ornamental note to the B flat, and consequently the progression is by no means ugly. Dr. Gladstone drew a remark from his Example No. 1 with the object of showing that it produced the effect of two scales going at the same time; but it seems to me that one must know that the second fifth is not a true fifth, and therefore that the A cannot belong to the key of G. It is clear that the A in the example that appears here would be too flat for an A in the key of G, and therefore those notes, although commencing G, A, B, are clearly, as they stand here, in the key of C. I must say, for myself, that the progression of fifths from the subdominant to the dominant is less offensive than any other consecutive fifth. If you take a succession of triads throughout the whole region of the musical scale of C, the consecutive fifths least offensive to my ear are those which fall on the F and G, notwithstanding the tritone which is involved, which might tend under other circumstances to make the effect still more disagreeable. But the progression from the second chord to the third is terrible in its effect, although I cannot accord with the reason so far given—namely, that there is not one single note that has any affinity in the two harmonies—inasmuch as the succession of the very same chords in their first inversion is quite unobjectionable.

Dr. Bridge.—The only observation I have to make is that I am very glad Dr. Gladstone has not made it more difficult for us unfortunate teachers to argue with our pupils. It is always a question with pupils why consecutive fifths should be forbidden, and they always make desperate efforts to write the forbidden intervals. I must say I am glad he has not given his high authority to the malcontents who would sweep down all the rules which we teachers find extremely useful. There is one distinction Dr. Gladstone made which I fail to see—namely, between twelfths and fifths. With regard to No. 25, he thought in that passage if there were fifths instead of twelfths, the effect would be more rough, but I not know that it conveys that to my ear. I begin to think it is a question of individual feeling very much. Mr. Stephens likes the progression of fifths between the fourth and fifth of the scale.

Several Members.—No, no.

Mr. Stephens.—I said that is perhaps the *least* objectionable.

Dr. Bridge.—That is much the same. I think the progression from the subdominant to the dominant is perhaps the most horrible; but this it must be a question of individual

feeling. Dr. Gladstone has culled the sweets—as these fifths are termed by the old writers—from a great number of admirable compositions, but I do not know, after all, that it proved very much. I shall go away having been very much interested, but certainly with the determination not to write more consecutive fifths than I unfortunately fall into, and not to allow my pupils to do so without a great deal of protestation on my part.

Mr. G. A. Osborne.—I am very thankful to see that all our different tastes are consulted, and I dare say I shall leave this room, of course thanking Dr. Gladstone for the able paper he has given us, being enlightened by the discussion we have heard. But I wish distinctly to avow here my infirmity. I delight most thoroughly in all these consecutive fifths that we have heard from Chopin; I am enchanted with them. All I can tell you is that the charm is so great to my heart and to my mind that I should like always to avail myself in every possible way of any similar consecutive fifths.

Mr. Sedley Taylor.—I have several times looked the question up, but I have never come to any satisfactory reason for the rule. Consecutive fifths are to my ear intensely hideous, but I cannot give any reason for it.

The Chairman.—If no other gentleman will favour us with any remarks, I will take leave to trouble you with a few of my own. First of all, I should like to venture a speculation on the subject of diaphony. I thoroughly agree with Mr. Sedley Taylor, and anybody else who has in any shape the same feeling, that consecutive fifths are particularly ugly, and that our dislike to them is not merely from the habit of artificially trained ears, but from something in the natural fact itself which makes them repugnant to nature. It is repugnant to us at the present time, and not in this room alone, not in this country, but throughout all the civilised world wherever music is studied, and wherever it has resolved itself into a language instead of the barbarous jargon of savages; everybody shrinks from the sound of consecutive fifths. I cannot suppose that, as long as the organs of hearing have been the same, persons can have experienced pleasure many hundreds of years ago in progressions which are entirely offensive to us who hear them now; that the same acoustical properties, whatever they may be, which make them offensive in the nineteenth century could have been absent in the tenth century; and that progressions which through these as yet undiscovered properties are cacophonous to us can have been acceptable to the persons who heard them: and I think it is at least worthy of consideration whether in those written examples which come before us, and are quoted now and then in print, it may not have been intended that the parts should be sung alternately, and not together. The Greek term "antiphony" means, of course, the sounding of notes at once, and Aristotle

expressly forbids, as far as I can understand him from a good translation, antiphony in the fourth or the fifth, but says that antiphony in the eighth is permissible, and produces a good effect—namely, that when boys and men sing the same tune, one is obviously an octave above the other, and the effect is satisfactory, but that this singing of the same melody is not allowed in the interval of the fifth or the fourth. This was then offensive to the classic Greeks, and can it be possible that in the dark ages a different constitution of human organs can have prevailed, and have made that which was formerly and is now offensive, agreeable to the listeners, and, as our predecessor, whom patriotically we must honour, John of Dunstable, said, they were too beautiful, too much beauty could not be permitted, therefore, a succession of these delights was overpowering to the human senses. In the church, on the other hand, antiphony does not mean singing in combination, but singing in alternation, and in that sense I apprehend the diaphony of the dark ages in music must have been intended, and that as the parts were written a fifth asunder, one or other might be sung by a body of voices in one key, and then the other part be sung in response by another body of voices. It appears to me that such was the original form of the composition of a fugue—that one side of the choir would sing a passage, say, in the key of F, and that the other side would respond to it, say, in the key of C; then the first choir would continue a counterpoint or descant during the performance of the second choir, and the second choir would return the compliment when the *canto fermo* returned to the original singers; and so out of that diaphony our fugue has been developed. Now the bad effect of octaves seems to me to have a very obvious interpretation—namely, that by making two notes particularly prominent the rest of the score is enfeebled, and that thus the balance of harmony is entirely thwarted. The effect is excellent, of course, for an entire phrase of melody to be sung or played in octaves, whether it be to give prominence to a base or higher melody. Equivalent to that same effect is the subordinating of an accompaniment to a vocal part. The voice part is intended to be much more forcible than the accompaniment. Whether this is to be so enforced by throwing stronger power into the vocal delivery of the phrase, or whether by playing the passage on two different instruments in octaves, or on a pianoforte duplicating the passage throughout, it is only making that one entire phrase paramount in importance over the accompaniment. But when a passage of harmony in any number of parts has two notes made so very much more prominent than the rest, as is the case in the duplication of those two at the expense of the others, the other portion of the harmony is enfeebled, and the balance is destroyed. I think, with reference to some of the

examples we have heard, that from the overture of Mozart, and the sonata of Beethoven, and those two from the oratorio "St. Paul," they must be oversights of the composers. I cannot suppose for an instant that the authors intended to write any one of the examples. In the case of Beethoven's sonata and Mozart's overture the effect is so transient that it leaves little impression; but in the case of the "St. Paul" choruses I must own they have checked the pleasure the music has given me. I have noted them in public performance for the first time, not from exploring on paper, as having been conspicuous—not for beauty. There are several things which distinguish perfect fifths from major and minor intervals, and it is of great importance to teachers and to learners to observe those distinctions. Perfect intervals have two notes of the same quality, whereas a major interval may have both natural, or natural and sharp, or flat and natural. Perfect intervals when inverted produce again perfect intervals, whereas if we invert a major we produce a minor; if you extend a perfect interval by a semitone you change it from a concord to a discord, whereas if you extend a minor interval you have a major, and if it is a discord in the first instance so it is in the second, if a concord in the first instance so it is in the second. Then there is this matter of the consecution of perfect intervals being offensive, whether to cultivated or to barbarous ears, whereas the succession of sixths and of thirds is accepted as agreeable and euphonious by everybody. Then, again, taking two notes in the fundamental harmonies, we have, in the chord of the dominant seventh, a perfect fifth from the root to its fifth, and we have a diminished fifth from the third to the seventh. The imperfect interval requires that both its notes shall have a defined progression under the term resolution, whereas there is an entire freedom in the two notes of the perfect interval. We do not stop there. In the earliest forms of melody, before harmony was discovered, much more before it was regulated, there seems always to have been some instinct in men's minds to characterise these intervals of the fifth and fourth. The authentic and plagal modes dependent on melodic forms lying within the interval of the fifth for the conspicuous notes, or the interval of the fourth, were prescribed by Greek rule for melodic arrangement; and that which prevailed in Greece was received in the church, and forms one of the particular distinctions in the regulation of fugal construction as to the subject and answer. Often and often have I thought it would require the entire knowledge of a physicist to be able to probe this subject to its foundation; and it would be, I think, of very great interest to musicians, and possibly of value to the art of music, if this subject could be scientifically investigated. But the nearest approximation to a solution that I have made is the fact, first of all, that

successive fifths imply successive keys, and a very ill effect is produced by the want of some intervening harmony which shall lead by natural gradation from the one key to the other. That, on a tempered pianoforte, no key is in tune, we all admit in theory; but I am certain the human ear exercises a power of adjusting the sounds which are produced, and of accepting tempered sounds for the true sounds that they are intended to signify. This might be proved, even by examples upon a tempered pianoforte, from the very different effect that the same notes produce when played with a different context. So I believe that if one hears the chord of C followed by the chord of D, although both C and D harmonies are imperfect in pianoforte tuning, we have an impression of those two keys of C and D and we want some chord which shall lead by natural course from the first to the second. Now certain fifths are decidedly in tune in the same key, such as the fifth of the tonic and the fifth of the dominant, and the progression from one of these to the other has not the bad effect which other progressions of fifths have. Also the fifth of the tonic and the subdominant may be used, as in the Pastoral Symphony of Beethoven, with beautiful effect. By an extraordinary coincidence the same notes occur in the first chorus of Weber's "Oberon," and I think with the same happy effect. I cannot agree with Mr. Stephens as to the acceptance of the succession of the subdominant and dominant harmonies as beautiful. I think the progression in fifths of those two are entirely discordant. I think the subdominant is a diatonic root in any key, but its influence ceases when, passing upward, the tonic is reached, and then a new derivation of the notes is to be considered. That tonic stands as the natural resting-place between the subdominant and the dominant, and to proceed from the fifth below the tonic to the fifth above the tonic, without the intervention of the tonic itself between, I think, takes us by the boldest and roughest and rudest plunge from one key to another. Now, whether we are to follow Helmholtz's theory, and derive the minor key from the major third below its tonic, and suppose that C minor is derived from the key of A flat, counting C as the fifth harmonic, and, to pursue that theory further, to derive the beautiful chromatic chord, the minor second of the key, from the fifth still below that A flat, and so to bring into consideration the subdominant with reference to the key-note; or whether we are to take those two notes, D flat the ninth of the tonic and A flat the ninth of the dominant—wherever the dominant and the tonic are in tune their respective ninths must be in tune also; and, again, wherever—referring to the other theory—the third below the keynote is perfectly in tune, the perfect fifth below that must be true in the same manner. Thus, I think, is to be accounted for the fact that the progression of fifths

by semitones produces the good effect that we sometimes hear. Thus, in the Violoncello Sonata of Beethoven in F, there is an example of the two open strings of the violoncello sustained for some time (C and G) and then a progression to D flat and A flat. With regard to what Dr. Gladstone exemplified, of the resolution of the chord called the German sixth, I think it is from diffidence rather than from real repugnance to the effect that persons have shrunk from resolving the fifth from the bass A flat to the fifth from the bass G, while there is F sharp proceeding to G in another part. I think many ingenious devices that one finds in melodic progression to elude those two fifths are rather from diffidence to avoid breaking an established canon, than from shrinking from the bad effect which the progression involves. I think that is not a case of bad effect any more than the case of proceeding from the subdominant to the tonic or the dominant to the tonic by consecutive fifths, or the instance of the violoncello sonata of which I was just speaking. These are, however, only speculations, but they are not accidental—they are the result of deliberation—and if persons who have the means, from a knowledge of physics, to pursue the subject further home, and work to a real explanation of what are these mysterious and yet beautiful elements at the command of musicians, it will be, I think, of very great service.

Mr. Southgate.—May I ask Dr. Gladstone if he will tell us whether he has given any study to one instance of the fifths, and that is the mixture stop of an organ? Of course one is well aware that the fifth from a root is very different from the fifth that comes from mixture stops, but they are very unpleasant to the ear.

Mr. Stephens.—Before Dr. Gladstone replies, allow me to correct an impression which seems to have gone abroad, that I said I admired the progression of fifths from the subdominant to the dominant: I merely say I think that those particular two are the least objectionable. I think they are abominable, but the others are still more so.

Dr. Gladstone.—I really must not occupy your time any longer, but I will just reply to Mr. Southgate, and also to Dr. Pole, who referred to the fact that fifths occur in every compound tone. Of course those fifths are very much weaker than the ground tone which generates them. With regard to mixture stops, it is obvious that it is a totally different thing to the progression of two notes which are both equal in quality and strength. In the latter case each fifth would have its own series of harmonies. There is a wide difference between the two things. I really must not occupy your time in endeavouring to reply to all the observations which have been made; I only ask you all to join with me in thanking the Chairman, not only for his kindness in presiding, but for his very valuable remarks.

April 3, 1882.

G. A. OSBORNE, Esq.,

Vice-President, In the Chair.

X

SIR WILLIAM STERNDALE BENNETT: A BRIEF REVIEW OF HIS LIFE AND WORKS.

By Arthur O'Leary, Esq.

With no startling incidents or striking events to mark its course, the life of Sterndale Bennett will yet be always interesting to every one who likes to trace the progress and development of a truly artistic genius. It will be my endeavour to put before you plainly and simply the salient features of a career highly important in the history of musical art in England. The Bennett family were of Derbyshire orgin. Sterndale Bennett's grandfather, John Bennett, was born in the picturesque village of Ashford-in-the-Peak in 1750. Whilst still a youth he left for Cambridge, where he was appointed lay clerk at King's. He married, and had a numerous family. Robert, one of the elder sons, father of Sterndale Bennett, studied the organ and composition with Dr. Clarke. He became a musician of ability, and settled in Sheffield, where he took an excellent position and held the office of organist at the parish church. Amongst his many friends were Mr. William Howard and Mr William Sterndale, the latter a man of literary tastes, some of whose verses were set to music by Robert Bennett and published by subscription. In 1812 he married Elizabeth, daughter of James Donn, curator of the Botanical Gardens, Cambridge, and author of a classified catalogue of plants. He had two daughters and a son—William Sterndale Bennett—who was born on April 13, 1816, in Norfolk Row, Sheffield. Little Sterndale was not fated to know for long a father's care or a mother's love. He lost his mother when two years old, and his father died a year afterwards. Thus he was doubly orphaned in tender age. Happily his grandfather adopted him, and Mr. Howard took charge of the child until he could be sent to Cambridge. Here he was placed, when eight years old, as chorister at

King's College, and had the educational advantages afforded to the boys of the various choirs.

At this time the cultivation of music had already awakened to fresh life in England. Since the time of Purcell, English composers had devoted themselves principally to church composition. In this, at least, they were most successful. Without claims to great originality, taken separately, they formed in the aggregate a school bearing the stamp of individuality. Two societies for the cultivation of the art in a wider sense were founded, the one in 1812, the other in 1822—the Philharmonic Society and the Royal Academy of Music. In both the young chorister was destined to play an important part. The Academy had been in existence about three years when the Rev. F. Hamilton, superintendent of the institution, visited Cambridge, of which seat of learning he was a member. He soon heard of Bennett's youthful talents, and suggested the newly founded school as the proper place for developing it. Young Bennett was accordingly sent to London. He entered the Academy March 7, 1826. Agreeably to his grandfather's wish, he took the violin as his principal study. Oury and, later, Spagnoletti were his masters. With Charles Lucas and W. H. Holmes he studied harmony and the pianoforte. For this instrument his exquisite touch manifested itself early. He was by nature a pianist, and in a short time he gave the pianoforte his principal attention. The young student's natural gifts soon came to be acknowledged and valued by his associates; the more readily, perhaps, because of his amiable and affectionate character, which endeared him to all with whom he came in contact. He was never a great talker, but even at that early age his remarks on music were original and worthy of note. His intuitive grasp of a composer's intention was already conspicuous. The Academy committee, to their credit, appreciating his talent, had admitted him a free student. He showed no great application the first two or three years of his academical career. Nevertheless he advanced sufficiently to appear as pianist at an Academy concert held on September 6, 1828, at the Hanover Square Rooms, when he played a concerto by Dussek; his first score (a fairy chorus) bears that year's date, and is in the possession of Mr. Kellow Pye. He had already gained a prize for harmony the previous year.

Towards the end of 1829 young Bennett's health failed. Whilst his fellow students were anticipating the pleasures of home, he had to face the prospect of spending Christmas in the all but empty house in Tenterden Street. One of his fellow students, Scipione Brizzi, a vocalist, shared his room during the vacation. On Christmas Eve Bennett was taken seriously ill late at night. The Italian youth, unable to call for assistance, nursed his younger companion until morning at length appeared. Sterndale Bennett remembered this attention with

grateful affection, and always attributed his recovery to his friend's timely care.

Besides attending to his regular studies, young Bennett sang at St. Paul's and in various other places where boys' voices were in request. He even appeared on the stage, but only once, taking the part of Cherubino in Mozart's "Nozze di Figaro" at one of the operatic performances instituted by the Academy committee at the Bijou Theatre in the Haymarket.

He was transferred from Lucas to Dr. Crotch in the autumn of 1831. The boy's constructive power did not seem to develop greatly under Crotch, but nevertheless his first important work (a symphony) was written with him. Cipriani Potter succeeded Crotch as principal the following midsummer, and took his composition class. Bennett became his pupil for the piano also. On beginning with his new instructor he brought up the first sketch of a Concerto in D minor. He intended it to consist of four movements, but Potter wisely dissuaded him from this, and the third movement—a Scherzo—does duty as Finale. The work was brought before the public at a concert on June 21, 1833.

At this time the musical members of the aristocracy took great interest in the fortunes of the Academy. Prominent as Chairman of Committee was Lord Burgersh, who may be considered the founder of the institution. He was present at this concert, and beside him sat a musician who, although he had only just entered upon manhood, was already famous. This was Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. When the young performer appeared in his Academy uniform, Mendelssohn rose from his seat in order to have a good look at him. He was much struck by the promise displayed in the composition, and singled out the slow movement for special commendation. He invited the youthful writer to Germany, and in reply to Bennett's modest rejoinder, said: "No, not as a pupil, but as a friend." Thus began a life-long friendship.* The concerto, I may add, was published at the expense of the Academy Committee.

After this event Bennett continued at the Academy for about four years. He appeared in public frequently, and was honoured by an invitation from the Philharmonic Society to play his concerto at one of their concerts. He applied himself in the meantime steadily to composition. In 1833 he had

* The following notice, from the *Harmonicon*, of Bennett's composition and performance may prove not uninteresting: "The most complete and gratifying performance was that of young Bennett, whose composition would have conferred honour on any established master, and his execution of it was really surprising, not merely for its correctness and brilliancy, but for the feeling he manifested, which, if he proceed as he has begun, must in a few years place him very high in his profession."

produced already a second concerto, an Overture in D minor, and a second symphony in the same key. He wrote an overture to "The Merry Wives of Windsor," and his third concerto, in C minor, the following year. The then existing Society of British Musicians afforded opportunities for the hearing of these works. He played his C minor Concerto here in 1836; a Symphony in G minor was also brought forward the same year. The previous year he had also finished his Sestet in F sharp minor. Thus at the age of nineteen, Bennett had already written a number of works, each one being sufficiently important to indicate his position as a musician of mark.

Sterndale Bennett resumed his acquaintance with Mendelssohn at the Düsseldorf Festival in the spring of 1836. He was accompanied by Klingemann and J. W. Davison. Mendelssohn gave him an invitation to play at Leipzig the following winter. On his return to London, he played a fourth concerto at an Academy concert on July 1. This work is still in manuscript. On its first trial, the middle movement failed to make a favourable impression on the students present. Bennett felt this keenly. He sat up working all that night, and the next morning brought down an entirely new movement, with the parts copied, ready for rehearsal. This was the charming "Barcarolle," one of his happiest and most widely known inspirations.

Responding to the invitation received from Mendelssohn, Sterndale Bennett, whose fame began to extend abroad, started for Leipzig on the 21st of September, 1836, leaving the Academy, his home for ten and a half years, for the last time. This visit seems to have been one of those pleasant experiences enjoyed by few. The Leipzig people were essentially music-loving. Engaged in widely extended commerce, they welcomed strangers more readily than cities having less intercourse with foreign nations. The narrow national prejudice that would exclude everything foreign, whether good or indifferent, had not yet arisen, or was, at least, then lying dormant. The famous Gewandhaus concerts, brought under Mendelssohn to the highest point of perfection, the knot of famous musicians to be met with, the hospitality of the wealthy and highly educated families who welcomed him to their houses, all combined to make this one of the happiest periods in his life. His enjoyment was further enhanced by his intercourse with Robert Schumann, who received him as artist and friend with open arms. It is remarkable that a close friendship between Mendelssohn and Bennett did not develop itself until later on. Though mixing a good deal in society, Bennett devoted much time to music, and here it was that he gave the finishing touches to his charming overture "The Najads." On the 19th of January, 1837, he made his first appearance

before a foreign audience. He selected his Third Concerto for the occasion. His performance had the most gratifying success, and on the 16th of March following the "Parisina" overture was produced, Mendelssohn conducting.

Sterndale Bennett remained in Germany until the end of June, when he returned to London. He now commenced an independent career. He received a parting gift from his fellow students, presented to him with a few touching words by the principal, Mr. Potter, in the Academy concert-room. He was appointed professor of that institution in the autumn of the same year.

In October of the year following (1838), he paid a second visit to the hospitable city where he had been so well received. He took with him a concerto, also in F minor. The first and third movements were new, but the "Pastorale" previously alluded to did duty as middle movement. Mendelssohn, to whom he played it, did not seem to fancy the "Pastorale" either. Hereupon Bennett tried the "Barcarolle." This charmed Mendelssohn so much that he prevailed upon the composer to substitute it. One cannot but think that the unappreciated "Pastorale" must have been a favourite with its author. He had not even taken the "Barcarolle" with him, but he wrote it out afresh, and performed the complete Concerto on the 17th of January, 1839. The work was published in this form, and is known as the Fourth Concerto.

Whilst on the subject of our composer's continental visits, I may add that he revisited Leipzig in 1842 and played this favourite work once again. The Scotch Symphony of the famous German musician was produced for the first time the same evening. I must not enter into any further details of Bennett's life abroad, beyond giving you a few extracts from a letter I received from a lady (a connection of the Mendelssohn family) now residing near Dresden. After a few words in regard to the length of time that has elapsed since the events referred to, the writer continues:—

Sterndale Bennett was frequently a welcome guest at our house, and I often met him and Mendelssohn together. Their relations to each other were those of surpassing friendliness. Each loved and respected the other, and Mendelssohn felt the highest pleasure not only in the eminent gifts but also in the characteristic and amiable nature of the young artist. One can say that Mendelssohn, like an elder brother, shared in his strivings and successes, and always supported him readily with his counsel in the most loving manner. Mendelssohn no doubt exercised at this time a marked influence on your celebrated countryman. Their intercourse was most cordial and intimate. They both were given to pleasantry, and Bennett in particular was, as a rule, in the mood for all manner of fun. The German language, still unfamiliar to him—though he studied it industriously—German life and customs, all gave rise to laughable mistakes and witty remarks. Within the circle of his more intimate friends, Bennett's childlike merriment was almost irrepressible. He was fond of performing divers tricks, and his anecdotes and comical stories were received with roars of laughter. . . . Amongst his intimate friends must be included Mr. Monicke, an English scholar; also Prince Reuss, who had been educated in England and

was very musical. In large assemblies, Bennett was reserved and retiring, but everywhere popular; all considering themselves fortunate in counting him amongst their guests. . . . An interesting group of artists sojourned in Leipzig at that time, and all, probably without exception, felt themselves attracted towards the young Englishman. His first appearance at the Gewandhaus [the writer evidently refers to his performance in 1839] was a decided success. The refined grace with which he gave the second movement of the concerto—entitled "Barcarolle," if I mistake not—inspired his hearers with enthusiasm. Mendelssohn bantered him on this occasion on a nervousness that made him accelerate the time, though he was greatly pleased with his triumph. Of Bennett's compositions, his "Najades" charmed the most. . . .

Writing to his sister in Berlin at this period, Mendelssohn says:—

You cannot believe what excellent and interesting phenomena pass over our horizon in such a winter, and how much I should wish you to witness them also. . . . Last week Bennett played his C minor Concerto amid the triumphal applause of the Leipzigers, whom he seems to have made his friends and admirers at one stroke, for you hear only Bennett everywhere. In the next Concert for the Poor comes a new Overture of his. . . .

In the intervals between these visits abroad Bennett resided in London. It was a restless period of his life. He was nevertheless always at work. He played at concerts, gave lessons, and occupied himself with an oratorio also. Two choruses, written at this time, were afterwards inserted in "The Woman of Samaria."

I have now to record the happy and important event of his marriage. A few days before his departure for Germany, in 1842, he became engaged to Mary Ann, daughter of Commander James Wood, of the Royal Navy. This young lady was admitted into the Royal Academy of Music in 1838, two years after her future husband had completed his studentship there. With the feeling of strict propriety natural to him, Bennett waited until Miss Wood had left the Academy before he asked her to be his wife. Matters being happily arranged, he settled down to steady work, and laid the foundation of a widely extended high-class connection. He was married on April 9, 1844, at Southampton. Bennett's choice showed his keen insight into character. It was amply justified. His wife, a woman of the most endearing characteristics, pleasing in manner and personal appearance, clever, full of tact, and fondly devoted to her husband, exercised that excellent influence which made his married life thoroughly happy. At this time he wrote some of his songs and shorter pianoforte pieces, but no event of importance marked the first years of his wedded life.

In 1843, the Music Professorship at Edinburgh University became vacant. Bennett, in view of his approaching marriage, determined to apply for it. He travelled to Scotland the following new year. The University authorities had much felt the neglect with which the late professor had treated

them. They determined, therefore, to elect some one who could devote himself thoroughly to the work and remain in residence. This Bennett could not undertake; hence his candidature came to nothing. Years afterwards, on a fresh vacancy occurring, overtures were made to him privately by the heads of the University, but he was then far too much engaged to be able conscientiously to accept a responsibility that would take him so far from home.

Busy as he was, Bennett had had for some time in contemplation an undertaking which was an instance of his thorough disinterestedness in the cause of his art. His taste for music of the severe school and admiration for the older masters were, if anything, increased, more particularly as regards Bach, by his residence in Leipzig. Mendelssohn's veneration for the great cantor is well known. His enthusiasm found ready sympathy with his English fellow-artist: gathering around him a band of congenial friends and music lovers, Bennett instituted the Bach Society in 1843.

Teaching from morning till night, he had little time for either writing or practice. He continued those model performances of classical pianoforte music, which he had instituted in 1843; meetings which were not only valued by musicians, but also did much towards raising the standard of taste amongst non-professional lovers of music. In addition to these labours, he was appointed one of the jurors in the musical department of the Great Exhibition of 1851. This additional responsibility involved his commencing his daily occupations often at six in the morning. Two years later Sterndale Bennett had a compliment paid him, not only gratifying to him personally, but reflecting honour on English music and musicians generally. Accompanied by Mrs. Bennett, he had made a short excursion into Derbyshire, to which region family ties had endeared him; and on their return they found a letter from the directors of the Gewandhaus concerts, offering him the conductorship for the season 1853-54.

The following extracts from a letter written by Mrs. Bennett to her friend Miss Annette Preusser, at Leipzig, shows her husband's appreciation of this flattering testimony of the estimation in which he was held abroad, as well as the conscientious scruples which prevented his acceptance of the proffered honour. Mrs. Bennett writes:—

. . . On our return to Southampton we found the directors' very handsome letter, and my husband was so completely overwhelmed with the feelings of joy and pride in the receipt of such a testimony of friendship and good feeling that he would have accepted it at *once;* but at the same time came many business letters . . . and having also most responsible situations in the Royal Academy of Music and Queen's College . . . my husband immediately came to London to consult with some influential friends. . . . Our friend Cipriani Potter was away in Germany, and he would have been

the only one able to have assisted my husband during his absence. This obstacle (not having Mr. Potter's address) seemed to be insurmountable. I have been so anxious you should not imagine we were ungrateful or capricious. . . . It was a great, great grief to my dear husband when he considered it was his first duty to remain in England; for it was his fondest wish to have come to Leipzig. . . .

The principal event of 1854 was the first production in England, after long and patient preparation, of John Sebastian Bach's immortal work, the "Passion" music according to St. Matthew. This work has since been often performed with larger means at command, but the greater the difficulties the greater the credit due to Bennett, whose influence did much towards diffusing the love and admiration for Bach which he felt himself. To Sterndale Bennett is due the honour of *first* having introduced the wondrous "Passions Musik" to the notice of his countrymen. The performance, it will be remembered, took place at the Hanover Square Rooms on April 6, 1854.

At the end of this season Mr. Costa resigned the conductorship of the Philharmonic. The directors selected Herr Richard Wagner as his successor. The result did not justify their expectation. Indeed, Herr Wagner's position was a very difficult one, succeeding, as he did, a leader who enjoyed extraordinary popularity, not only with the public but with the unrivalled orchestra under his command. The new leader failed to overcome the strong prejudice existing against him, and resigned the position. In this emergency the directors looked at home, and offered the honourable post to Sterndale Bennett, who accepted it.

It is scarcely necessary to enter into any details with regard to his activity in this new sphere. His appointment was welcomed by a large number of professional friends, by the press, and the public generally. He brought with him substantial support to the society. His influence favoured that conservative tinge which had been always one of the society's distinguishing characteristics. During the term of his conductorship (1856-66) the Philharmonic enjoyed tolerable material prosperity, and, in a musical sense, maintained its high prestige. The initiatory concert under his direction (April 14, 1856) will always be memorable for the first appear- of Madame Clara Schumann in England.

In 1856 the Chair of Music at Cambridge became vacant. Bennett offered himself as a candidate, and was returned at the head of the poll with the triumphant majority of 149 votes. Many of his friends travelled long distances to record their suffrages.

Notwithstanding these important additions to his professional duties, Bennett continued his class at the Academy. The institution was languishing, owing perhaps to a certain

lethargy in musical matters pervading the country, and no doubt also to a general want of confidence in the committee of management. In order to obtain fresh means for keeping the institution open, Lord Westmoreland, as chairman, arranged a grand concert at St. James's Hall, which the Queen consented to honour by her presence. This would have been an excellent opportunity for showing the results of Musical Academic training in all its branches. The opportunity was lost! Half the evening was taken up by portions of a mass composed by the noble president, sung by a number of Italian vocalists who had possibly never heard of the Academy before, and the official director of the concerts, Charles Lucas, was relegated to the post of assistant-conductor. Sterndale Bennett naturally resented these arrangements as a slight on all those whose successful careers reflected credit on the Academy. In this view he was supported by Cipriani Potter, who, though Principal of the Royal Academy, was helpless in the matter. Bennett resigned at once, and Potter followed his example the year following (1858), both resignations being the result of various vexatious circumstances to which the above-named incident formed the culminating point. When too late Lord Westmoreland perceived the errors of the course he had pursued. He endeavoured several times to induce Bennett to reconsider his determination, but without avail, nor could he succeed even in obtaining a personal interview.

The committee of the first Leeds Festival in 1858 unanimously elected him conductor, and requested a work from his pen. Bennett accepted this commission, and in order to fulfil it left London early in July. The family had visited Eastbourne the previous summer. Some disappointment with regard to quarters had led them on that occasion to seek shelter at the "Gilbert Arms" inn, nearly opposite the station. Bennett, always averse to change, found in this quaint little hostel, with its old-fashioned gables and ivy-clad roof, an appropriate spot for the completion of the "May Queen," a work thoroughly English in character and sentiment.* He completed the cantata in six weeks. At Leeds he met with a warm reception, the Yorkshire people claiming him as one of themselves. The festival was a great success. The Queen opened the new Town Hall, wherein it was held. The "Elijah" was the first work performed, and the performance was considered wonderfully fine. The "May Queen" was warmly received. The interest it created was an earnest of the constantly increasing popularity the work now enjoys. Three years later the committee repeated the compliment paid

* The bow window in which his writing-table stood was removed to his London residence, in St. John's Wood Road, when the old inn was pulled down.

their eminent countryman, but the intended festival was postponed.

A third performance of Bach's "Passion" music took place in 1858 at St. Martin's Hall. Prince Albert was present and congratulated Bennett on its success. The masterpiece was repeated (for the last time under Bennett's direction) on May 24, 1862, at St. James's Hall. Mr. Sims Reeves sang on this occasion, and the remarkable artistic power displayed by him is not likely to be forgotten by those who were present.

Increasing occupations prevented the exercise of our composer's creative powers during the two or three years following 1858. His leisure during this period was almost entirely devoted to the editorship of a Chorale-Book adapted for the English Church, conjointly with his friend Mr. Otto Goldschmidt. The unflagging interest with which Bennett worked at this collection was very remarkable, and not less so was the exceptional skill he displayed in harmonising each strain according to its date. The beautiful chorale "Dayspring of Eternity" ("Morgenglanz der Ewigkeit") influenced the form of one of his most finished and mature works.

In July, 1861, her Majesty's Commissioners invited him to represent English music at the forthcoming Exhibition of 1862, by an unaccompanied chorale or hymn from his pen. He was informed that Meyerbeer had been asked to represent Germany, Verdi Italy, and Auber France. Bennett accepted the compliment readily. The Poet Laureate sent him some verses the following November; additional lines reached him in January. Finding that the work assumed larger proportions than originally contemplated, Bennett received the Commissioners' sanction to add accompaniments. Whilst completing the ode, an anxious though somewhat amusing correspondence took place between the Commissioners and the composer. They requested him to name a conductor, as Mr. Costa declined to rehearse the work; he did not consider this to be within his province. Two names were then submitted to him, but he declined to choose between them. The possible omission of his work from the programme being hinted at in the event of his continued refusal, the composer only intimated his respectful submission to any decision at which her Majesty's Commissioners might arrive. Eventually, Mons. Sainton was appointed by them.

The Exhibition year was a very busy one for Bennett. Three weeks after the performance of the inaugural ode, May 1, he commenced another ode, to words by Charles Kingsley, written for the installation of the Duke of Devonshire as Chancellor of Cambridge. In June he wrote his overture "Paradise and the Peri" for the forthcoming jubilee concert of the Philharmonic Society. With all this, he

continued his teaching, conducted concerts, and gave the finishing touches to the Chorale-Book.

The concert arranged to celebrate the jubilee of our oldest instrumental society, in 1862, was of course another addition to Bennett's ordinary labours. The directors, anxious to increase its attraction, invited Madame Lind-Goldschmidt to sing, but Madame Goldschmidt at first declined; urged by Bennett, however, she, as a mark of her esteem for him, reconsidered her determination. Mdlle. Titiens sang the same evening, and that much-esteemed pianist Mrs. Anderson made her final appearance in public. The "Paradise and Peri" was naturally conducted by the composer; when the strain of the chorale, indicating the Peri's appearance at the heavenly portals, arose in its simple beauty, the conductor turned and glanced smilingly at his co-editor in the Chorale-Book, as if to remind him of the source which had given rise to its introduction.

Amidst the excitement of the successes achieved by the composer, one anxiety made itself more and more prominent. Mrs. Bennett's health had been in an unsatisfactory state for some time. The rest at Eastbourne after this trying season failed to restore her strength, and she breathed her last on the 17th of October following. This was a blow from which it may be said the devoted husband never recovered; his cheery laugh and excellent spirits deserted him, and some time elapsed ere he could obtain an unbroken night's rest after months of ceaseless attention to the care of the cherished invalid.

In the spring of 1863 he gave a series of lectures* at the London Institution, and commenced his Symphony in G minor. This was played at the Philharmonic the next season, and in January, 1865, at Leipzig, under the composer's direction. In 1866 he resigned the Philharmonic conductorship, but accepted in its place an appointment affording wider scope for his influence, and a perhaps more congenial atmosphere of activity—he became principal of the Royal Academy of Music. Since Mr. Potter's resignation as principal, which occurred a year after that of Bennett as professor, the Academy, crippled for want of funds, had not progressed either in efficiency or in public estimation, and the number of professors was popularly supposed to exceed that of the pupils. On Charles Lucas's retirement in 1866, owing to enfeebled health, the directors looked about for a worthy successor. They entered into negotiations with Bennett, who, after considerable hesitation, yielded to their solicitations, and accepted office. The deep-seated affection for his old home was sufficient incentive for the new principal to do his utmost to raise the Academy to

* These lectures are still in manuscript.

the highest point of usefulness. He was loyally supported by Mr. Otto Goldschmidt, who had accepted the office of vice-principal and, at Bennett's urgent request, also the direction of the orchestra and choir. Fate was not benign. After two years it was found that the funds were unable to bear the strain of the new organisation; the Chancellor of the Exchequer withdrew without inquiry the grant of £500 a year, and the directors offered to return the charter to her Majesty. The Queen was advised that she could not accept the offer, and the directors resigned shortly after. A period of grave anxiety followed, upon which Lord Dudley accepted the office of President which had become vacant, and Sterndale Bennett was elected *ex-officio* Chairman of Committee. The prosperity which commenced when he returned to the Academy continued unchecked, and indeed the number of students admitted up to the present day has been in ever-increasing ratio.

Bennett was busy at this time preparing his cantata "The Woman of Samaria" for the Birmingham Festival. He completed this important and beautiful work during the summer vacation preceding the festival. "This real addition to the treasures of art," says a musical contemporary, "is in itself sufficient to make the Birmingham Festival of 1867 memorable in the annals of music."*

At this period the degree of M.A. was conferred upon him by the University of Cambridge, and, after nearly twelve years of anxious honorary work as the occupant of the Chair of Music, he was allowed an annual stipend. He visited his native town in 1869, where a grand concert was given in his honour; and in 1870, at the installation of the Marquis of Salisbury as Chancellor of the University of Oxford, on June 22, he received the degree of D.C.L.; this being the first, and I believe the only, instance of this dignity being conferred upon a musician. He was knighted on March 24 of the year following, and presided at the Annual Festival of the Royal Society of Musicians in April. In August he was present at the Centenary Beethoven Festival, at Bonn, by invitation of the committee.

No honour received, no distinction conferred, touched Bennett so profoundly as the testimonial presented to him on April 19, 1872. This testimonial, which was to consist in the endowment of a biennial male scholarship in the Royal Academy of Music, to be called the Sterndale Bennett scholarship, and of an annual prize to a female pianoforte-student, had its origin in the desire of the professors of the institution to offer their principal a token of their affectionate esteem on the occasion of his receiving the honour of knighthood at the hands of her most gracious Majesty. In this they were

* See *Musical World* for 1867.

heartily supported by the most distinguished members of the musical profession and lovers of music in general. St. James's Hall was filled to overflowing when the Attorney-General, Sir John Duke Coleridge, now Lord Chief Justice of England, took the chair. On his right sat the guest of the day, in honour of whom the assemblage took place.* Professor Macfarren ("his old schoolfellow," as Bennett termed him) was called upon to explain the origin of the testimonial, and the chairman having charmed the audience with an eloquent and appropriate address, handed the roll of subscribers, amidst the enthusiastic applause of all present, to Sir Sterndale, who was evidently greatly moved.

The production of the overture to "Ajax" took place this same season at the last Philharmonic concert, and in his less busy time at the seaside he finished the first three movements of his "Maid of Orleans" sonata—completing it later on in the autumn. From this time forward he devoted his leisure to the "Ajax" music. Sketches of various numbers remain, but the march only was completed.

In these latter years the Academy engrossed all his thoughts, if not all his time. Since 1868, when Mr. Goldschmidt resigned the vice-principalship and severed his connection with the Academy—notwithstanding that Sir Sterndale pressed him to retain the conductorship of the orchestra—his anxieties greatly increased. To enter into details were to write an interesting section of Academy history. Not only did the number of students continually augment, but the higher standard adopted attracted talent of the first order. He had the gratification of seeing the grant restored through the friendly influence of Mr. Gladstone in 1870. His popularity was unquestionable. With all gentleness of disposition he allowed no relaxation of discipline. He pursued the course he considered best for the fulfilment of the objects he had in view with quiet energy. His great aim was to raise the tone of the future musicians of England. As the responsibilities of his post increased, his elastic and cheerful temperament, which had enabled him through life to cope with many difficulties successfully, gave way. The end came soon. His illness was short. To the last his troubled senses busied themselves about that spot on which his fondest

* The *Times* critic thus refers to the music performed: "The programme was designedly short, and merely included the overture called 'The Najades,' long celebrated over Europe, together with two beautiful part-songs, 'Sweet stream' and 'Come, live with me.' The overture was admirably played by the Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Mr. W. G. Cusins. The part-songs were intrusted to Mr. Henry Leslie's choir, with Mr. Leslie himself as director. Both were sung to perfection, the second so well that it had to be repeated. This was but a small modicum of Sir W. S. Bennett's music for such an occasion; but the other proceedings occupied so much time that a longer concert might have been inconvenient."

memories and affections were centred—his old home. In the forenoon of Monday, February 1, 1875, he passed peacefully away. The sad tidings soon reached the Academy, where the classes were in full activity. The message went from room to room, quelling all sounds of study, until, as if with a dying cadence from afar, all was stilled in deathlike hush.

In estimating the position which Sterndale Bennett is likely to occupy as composer and artist, we must acknowledge that this is too early a period to allow of a satisfactory conclusion. His personal friends might be accused of partiality; neither can unbiassed judgment be credited to those who, during his lifetime, persistently contested his claims to admiration. Avoiding, as much as possible, the expression of personal opinion, I shall endeaver to adduce the impressions of a few independent authorities. We have already seen in what high estimation he was held abroad, and all concurrent testimony points to this, that as a pianist he occupies a place unique in English art.

An eminent musician, now resident in England, who happened to arrive here a day or two before he played Mozart's D minor Concerto at the Philharmonic, in 1848, was speaking to me recently of this performance.* Passing through Paris he had just heard, with delight and enthusiasm, Chopin, at the last famous concert given by that composer on the eve of the February revolution. This notwithstanding, the finish of the English pianist, his exquisite tone and touch, combined with masterful conceptions of the composer's intentions, was for him a new revealment, the memory of which is still fresh in his mind.

The testimony of Spohr, Mendelssohn, Hiller, and numbers of other noted musicians, might be adduced to a similar effect. Spohr says: "It is well known that Sterndale Bennett ranks among the first composers and pianists of England and the Continent." This, he assures us, is not only his opinion, but also that of the artists and art-lovers of Germany. Hiller, in an article which appeared in the *Cologne Gazette*, asserts that "his playing excited the greatest astonishment when he visited Leipzig." As to his compositions, we may broadly divide them into three groups: his pianoforte works, his vocal and his orchestral works. It is undoubtedly in the first named that he shows the most decided individuality. The four or, rather, five, concertos which so rapidly succeeded

* Referring to this concert, a critic of that time, not always guilty of paying Bennett compliments, speaks as follows: "Mr. S. Bennett's performance was in true keeping with so noble and dignified a composition. His feeling, his taste—so opposed to the prevailing style of most of the pianists of the present day—remind one of a great retired performer. That the mantle of J. B. Cramer has fallen upon our countryman is the general opinion. May he long continue to wear and deserve it."

each other were sufficient to establish Bennett's fame. They indicate his leaning towards forms long accepted rather than the modifications which Mendelssohn introduced.

Schumann refers to the third concerto (in C minor) as follows, in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, in 1837 :—

In sober truth, if we consider that the concerto was written when the composer was only in his nineteenth year, we cannot help being struck by so early a development of the artist's skill—by the calm arrangement and connection of the whole—by the euphony of the language and the purity of the thoughts. . . . What a subject of delight that the Leipzig public, little as it was prepared for such a work, acknowledged it quickly and joyfully! After the first movement, a purely lyrical piece, full of that beautiful human sentiment only to be found in the best musical compositions . . . began the Romance in G minor, so simple that the notes in it could almost be counted. Had I not known the poet had had the picture of a somnambulist in his mind whilst engaged in the task of composition, all the moving features of such a scene must have instantly touched my own and every feeling heart. As if afraid to waken the dreamer upon the lofty battlement, no one dared to breathe, and if the sympathy in many passages was almost like anxiety, it was softened down by the beauty of the composition into pure artistic enjoyment. Now came that wondrous chord, when the sleeping maiden appears out of danger . . . while the moonbeams play around her. This happy touch decided the matter, and in the last movement the public abandoned itself to the joy we are accustomed to derive from a master, whether he leads us to peace or strife.

A word also about the fourth (his best known) concerto, in F minor. If his earliest work in this category manifested by its extraordinary difficulties the first exuberance of youthful vigour, the Concerto in F minor, though written only five or six years later, exhibits mature experience. The dignified first movement with its stately opening and exquisite second subject of purest grace, its dainty Barcarolle and fiery Finale, form a work which has scarcely yet found due appreciation. Objections have been raised to the somewhat diffusive treatment of the concluding portion, but in Schumann's words, when speaking of another of the composer's productions: "Let any one attempt to change without injuring the work; the attempt will not prove successful."

An admirable article on "The Place of Sterndale Bennett in Music," from which I propose giving a few extracts, appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* after his death. The writer considers—

That the genius of Sterndale Bennett was essentially that of the pianoforte. He was, so to speak, a pianist by nature. His numerous compositions for his favourite instrument have not that orchestral largeness and breadth of manner which belong to the pianoforte compositions of Beethoven, and in a lesser degree to those of Mendelssohn. But they are remarkable and most interesting, in addition to their intrinsic beauty, as specimens of composition in which the capabilities of the instrument are strictly consulted —which represent precisely what the pianoforte can best do, and that only, and what no other instrument can imitate.

Citing the fourth concerto, as an instance wherein the composer has shown a specially clear perception of this characteristic of the instrument, he thinks it not improbable—

That the principal one, in F minor, will eventually be recognised as the most successful contribution to this class of composition since Beethoven. With less breadth of manner than Mendelssohn's concertos, it is marked by a truer artistic instinct, and a more refined handling of the instrument. That the composer could use the piano in its borrowed character as an instrument of melody and sentiment in equal perfection is proved by the Barcarolle in this same concerto, one of the few of Bennett's compositions which have found their way to the popular mind. And not less exquisite here are characteristic touches of effect; the contrast between the broken chords from the strings in the orchestra and that rippling phrase for the solo instrument which, once heard, can never be forgotten; or the joining of the flute with the piano at the return of the leading melody, suggesting, according to Mr. Macfarren's pretty fancy in his analysis of the work, "the reflection of loved faces in the sleeping water."

In some few of his smaller pianoforte pieces, we find the most striking instances of Mendelssohnian mannerism. In the three diversions this is especially noticeable. We must, however, remember that these pieces were written at Leipzig when Mendelssohn's influence reigned supreme, and when the English composer had daily intercourse with him.

This influence betrayed itself earlier in the famous "Three Sketches," which, for colouring, truth to nature, and poetical conception, Schumann calls "real Claude Lorraines in music; living landscapes of tone." It is with much regret I must omit the consideration of many beautiful and important works: of his sestett written when a youth, his exquisitely finished Trio in A major, the Rondo Piacevole, a delicate filagree entwined of sound. This ideal composition has already displaced in many cultivated minds, the more generally popular pieces of this class by other classical writers.

Then again we have the Toccata, Rondo à la Polonaise, and the romantic "Maid of Orleans" sonata, in all of which the composer's individuality more and more asserts itself. In a short notice of his career, which appeared in a weekly journal after his death, a sympathetic writer says:—

That no more beautiful composition than Sterndale Bennett's last work is to be found in the repertory of the instrument for which it was written, no emanation from a soul intensely poetical and more instinct with beauty of thought or grace of expression.

A mere enumeration of his other pianoforte works would be wearisome, and to speak of them as fully as I should wish there is no time. I must glance briefly at his orchestral works. Three of his best known overtures were written at a comparatively early age. He was still a student of the Academy when he wrote "Parisina" and the "Naiades," and the "Wood Nymphs" was written at Leipzig. In Parisina* and in the

* We find the following interesting quotation in the Crystal Palace Analytical Programme: "'In "Parisina,"' says Lord Jeffreys, 'there is no tumult or stir. It is all sadness and pity and terror. There is too much of horror, perhaps, in the circumstances, but the writing is beautiful throughout,

"Naiades" he already displays knowledge of orchestral effects, a breadth and treatment of colouring which, combined with their finish of form, grace, and poetic conception, have raised them to the rank of acknowledged masterpieces. I should be inclined to consider the "Wood Nymphs" a still happier inspiration. "It breathes," says Schumann "the purest and brightest poetic life;" and to my mind the composer has never expressed himself in a more masterly manner or with more individuality than in the overture before us.

I can do no more than mention his Symphony in G minor with its charming romance, and recall perhaps the most perfect work from his pen, the "Paradise and Peri" overture, to your recollection—a work in which the musical poet seems to have absorbed the fragrance of the lyrist's exquisite verse. I must not linger over the finished beauty of his songs, and even in regard to such works as the "May Queen," that idyl of primroses and violets, and the "Woman of Samaria," you will have reason to accuse me of shortcoming and insufficiency.

As regards the first of these two works, the writer in *Fraser* already alluded to considers that—

If the work as it stands is not to all intents and purposes an operetta without the stage action, it at least serves to prove what an opera Bennett might have given us, could he have been induced to turn his thoughts to the lyric stage. Music more happily illustrative of scenic effect and of character has seldom been written—of scenic effect in the buoyant Maypole chorus, where we almost seem to see the merry group of dancers swing past, "With a laugh as we go round," and in the stately pageant music, especially at the words "Thames is proud," when the pompous flotilla seems to come suddenly upon us, as it were, round a bend of the river ("Hark! what fine change in the music!"), and of character and feeling in the exquisite air of the lover, in the jovial bragging song of the supposed Robin Hood, with its genial touches of humour in the accompaniment, and in the beautiful trio, now an established favourite in concert-rooms, and which even the inanity of the words can hardly blemish.

In the "Woman of Samaria" we find all the chief characteristics of Sterndale Bennett as a composer standing forth in strong relief. Indeed the contrapuntal skill shown by the composer came as a surprise even upon those who held the highest opinion of his skill; but we find the grace, the purity, and melody to which we are accustomed in him tempering the severe dignity of style with which he considered it right to set the sacred text—a dignity befitting a Gothic cathedral in its beautiful proportions, yet combined with the delicate tracery and ornamentation, the judicious effects of light and shade which betray the master's craft. The impressions of his boyhood, when as a chorister he had sung the

and the whole wrapped in a rich and redundant veil of poetry, where everything breathes the pure essence of genius and sensibility.' It would be difficult in a few words to give a closer idea of Bennett's music than the great critic has here conveyed in his judgment on Byron's poetry."

anthems of the great Church writers are here revealed, showing themselves in new and beautiful forms, the spirit of the old Cathedral writers reappearing in new and winning garb, equally becoming but more attractive. There is a total absence of striving after dramatic effect, there is no hint of the sensational: like Bach, Bennett possessed a deep religious sentiment, a reverent love of truth inspired, and in no other phase has he given so plain an indication of his inner nature as in his sacred works. It is said somewhere that a man is judged when living by his most indifferent, but after death by his best, works. It remains for the art-world of the future to decide how high a place our gifted countryman is to take in the annals of art.

After this necessarily imperfect sketch of some of the productions of his genius, I must ask your permission to say a few words about his teaching—an occupation which engrossed the greater part of his time. The majority of his pupils were, as a matter of course, of the class which acquires music simply as an accomplishment. In no case did he allow them to swerve from the severe taste of the classical school; light music, so called, he could not tolerate. It is singular, but highly characteristic, that amongst the pieces written for his pupils, there is no instance of his using a theme not his own. At the Academy he accepted but few pupils. Amongst those we find the names of W. G. Cusins, Charles Steggall, Harold Thomas, &c., who belonged to both his pianoforte and composition class. On his return to the Academy in 1866, he took a class for composition only, of which the most distinguished members were Eaton Faning, Joseph Parry, William Shakespeare, Thomas Wingham, &c.

It is obvious that Bennett could have no sympathy with the so-called music of the future, but which perhaps might be now appropriately called the music of the present. Even as regards Schumann, he could hardly reconcile himself to his occasional overstepping of form, notwithstanding the purity and poetic grace breathing through his music. Much more did his instinctive refinement recoil from the slightest suspicion of vulgarity.

Apart from his art, Bennett felt much interest in the social and political aspects of life. He enjoyed the intimate friendship of many persons in the political and literary world. Amongst the latter I may instance the mutual attachment existing between him and Charles Kingsley. His shrewd observations on subjects to which presumably he had little time to give attention often surprised those whose special study they were. He was fond of reading, and here his taste was almost as strictly classical as in music itself. Many persons, not professedly musicians, were fascinated by his indifference to public applause, his attachment to art for art's

sake, and his steady endeavours to raise, rather than write down to, the level of public taste. Lord Coleridge gave expression to this feeling in addressing the meeting at St. James's Hall, when he said that—

> Most of those who were listening to him were cultivated, intelligent, and critical musicians, who could appreciate the value of Sir Sterndale Bennett's compositions; but, not being a musician himself he could only listen to them, feeling something of their grace and beauty of order—fancying, indeed, in some dim and distant way, that he could distinguish something of their scholarly character and finished structure, but still feeling more as a child towards them than as possessed of that full and intelligent knowledge which belonged to those whom he was addressing.

Now, but one thing more. No sculptured marble indicates the spot where rests the gentle master; nor does it need. But a suggestion made by one who has done much in aiding to obtain greater recognition of his genius is well worthy of your consideration. It is a proposal to issue a complete and uniform edition of his works. Assuming that sufficient public spirit be found amongst those possessing vested interests, what monument could be more appropriate to keep alive the honoured memory of William Sterndale Bennett?

DISCUSSION.

The Chairman.—Ladies and gentlemen, before asking a vote of thanks which I am sure you will accord to Mr. O'Leary for the paper he has now read, let me say that I think there must be some persons here, friends of the late Sir Sterndale Bennett who would say a few words. I look to Mr. Goldschmidt, and hope he may be induced to offer a few remarks. I am very glad that those scientific subjects which engage us from month to month are interspersed with these little biographical sketches. For my part, I have had the honour, as you may remember, of speaking about Berlioz and Chopin here, and I hope probably next year to give you another paper. I will ask Mr. Pye (a friend of mine who is present, and also a friend of Sir Sterndale Bennett) and I trust he will say a few words. It will be like putting a little wreath on Sir Sterndale Bennett's tomb.

Mr. Kellow Pye.—I have been most unexpectedly called upon by my friend, Mr. Osborne, to say a few words about my very dear friend, Sir Sterndale Bennett, with whom I was associated at the Royal Academy for a great many years, first as a fellow-student, and afterwards, when I had the honour of being connected with the Academy in another capacity, he was then the

principal; and he exhibited in every relation during his connection with the Academy all those qualities which have been so eloquently enlarged upon by our friend Mr. O'Leary. He was a very dear friend and a most admirable person to everybody who had the honour of his acquaintance. I can say no more, for I was called upon so wholly unexpectedly.

Dr. STAINER.—If I may say so, as a younger member of the Association, we ought to be grateful to Mr. O'Leary for having pointed out the important work which Sir Sterndale Bennett did in the foundation of the study of Bach's works. As a small boy I had the honour of being admitted a member of the first society, and I can assure you that I have a most vivid recollection of the very great pains that Bennett used to take at rehearsals. I fancy, as far as my memory serves me, we used to meet at Tenterden Street for the rehearsal of Bach's "Passion," and sometimes in the music-room in Store Street. I remember the immense trouble and pains he took about it; and knowing how very often the day had been passed in very fatiguing work, this shows his great self-sacrifice to the cause of music, thus to have devoted his evening to such laborious practice. In those days he had all the labour and anxiety of a pioneer. He had the words translated by that capital and estimable linguist Johnston, whom I remember; and he had to get the parts lithographed, and they were separate parts. Anybody who has had any experience of this will know that separate parts always give more trouble at rehearsals than copies in score. I would mention only in passing—and perhaps it may be of interest—that at one of those meetings, when Bennett was conducting us in these rehearsals of the Passion music, we had been singing one of the chorales several times over, and Mr. Hogarth, then the musical critic of the *Daily News*, got up and went across the room, and said: "Mr. Bennett, excuse my suggesting it, but would not it be nice if we had a few marks of crescendo?" Our original lithographed copies were without any mark of expression whatever. Mr. Bennett said, "Oh! yes, by all means. There are none in the original; but I see no objection to some being introduced." That remark did not altogether lead to favourable results, because I look with suspicion upon the fashion of stopping all accompaniments and turning the chorales practically into part-songs. I think it is a very great misreading of the author's intention; but that of course must remain a matter of opinion. However, that was the origin of it.

Mr. ARTHUR DUKE COLERIDGE.—I do not know that I have any right to address you, ladies and gentlemen, after the very able and interesting essay that Mr. O'Leary has read to us; but as a Cambridge man, and taking great pride in the memory of Sir Sterndale Bennett, I may be permitted to offer a few

random observations which occur to my mind at the mention of that distinguished name. Sir Sterndale was, as Mr. O'Leary has told us, originally a member on the lower foundation of my own college—King's College, Cambridge. I believe he was a chorister-boy there for a year or thereabouts. It does not speak very much for the discernment of our old organist, John Pratt, but the tradition in college was that he thought Bennett rather a commonplace boy than otherwise. Pratt, I think, likely enough, took a mistaken view, but such was the current tradition with us in scholars' days. Bennett was much attached to Cambridge. I well remember our satisfaction and pleasure on his succeeding Walmisley as Professor of Music. We were then very anxious, and I think naturally so, that Bennett should signalise his election by producing some work consistent with that early fame to which our lecturer has well and pointedly alluded. It seems to me a matter for sad reflection that, after achieving works of such stamp and high character as those which were the product of Bennett's early days, his multifarious duties as a teacher, and the professional work thereby cast on him, should have limited the results of his compositions in later life to the production of the "May Queen," the sacred cantata "The Woman of Samaria," and a few works for orchestra and piano. We felt this at the time at Cambridge; I dare say our enthusiasm might have been better regulated, but the new professor was importuned to write some work by way of inaugurating the first years of his professoriate. His answer was a kind one: "Give me a good libretto." The difficulty was soon got over. There was a member of St. John's College, who subsequently became a Fellow (I think he may have been a Scholar at the time), my friend Mr. Snow, now Dr. Kynaston, and headmaster of Cheltenham College. He was a man of great culture, an admirable Latin scholar, and a good musician; in fact, a person well qualified to write a libretto worthy of so eminent a musician as Sir Sterndale Bennett; it was suggested and assented to that Mr. Snow should translate into English poetry the "Ajax" of Sophocles. I had in my hand, last week, the original copy of Mr. Snow's English version. For the composer it was to be built, I suppose, somewhat on the same lines as the "Antigone" and "Ædipus," which Mendelssohn had set to music, and the "Eumenides" of Æschylus as arranged for Meyerbeer. Mr. Snow's version was soon in Bennett's hands; I fear some ten or eleven years elapsed, and we heard nothing more about the music or libretto. Mr Snow becoming anxious for the fate of his own work wrote to me in words to this effect: "I know you are an old friend of Sterndale Bennett. Will you jog his memory about 'Ajax'?" I did so by letter; he answered very kindly that he had sketched a plan, had set a part of the music, and

hoped to complete the whole: by the tone of his letter he was evidently very unwilling to abandon the task. I believe that two or three numbers of the music were found, after Bennett's death, and that the overture has been given at a Philharmonic concert. It is a pity that so interesting a work, which promised so fair at the outset, should not have been completed. I hope this episode, ladies and gentlemen, may not be without interest.

Mr. Otto Goldschmidt.—Mr. Chairman, it is not from any want of appreciation of your friendly call that I have not responded sooner, but it is from the natural difficulties which are inherent with any one not born to public speaking or to the language in which he has to speak; but I think that I should be failing in duty to a friend whose memory I extremely revere if I were not to say one or two words, and follow our excellent lecturer for a few moments in the remarkable lecture which he has delivered, remarkable also in so far as there could be hardly greater difficulty than at the present time to draw a sketch of the life and works of Sir Sterndale Bennett, and of the position which he held and will hold; and I only regret that his old associates, and those to whom he was a friend and a master, should not be present at this discussion, and that the task of adding to his praise should be left to those who have spoken before me and to myself. Ever since my boyhood the name of Sterndale Bennett was known to me, and I am stating a plain fact only when I say that when I came to Leipzig to study music there in the time of Mendelssohn, Bennett's name in musical circles was a household word, and that his compositions ranked with those of the best modern composers of Germany of the time. The ring of his name and the beauty of his compositions were acknowledged without bias at Leipzig, and it was probably these early impressions which, if I may say so, have followed me and haunted me through life. I am therefore surprised that our excellent lecturer, Mr. O'Leary, should have thought it necessary even to hint that any one or any class, could contest the position of Bennett as a composer. I entirely indorse what Mr. O'Leary mentioned about his pianoforte-playing, because I myself have a most vivid recollection of that very performance of Mozart's concerto to which he has referred. I do not think that it would be in proper keeping if I referred much to my personal connection with the late Sir Sterndale; but for three years I thoroughly made his acquaintance as a musician. It was while I had the honour and good fortune to be engaged with him upon the compilation of the chorales to which Mr. O'Leary has referred. And this much I would wish to impress upon the meeting—that although it was probably the busiest time of his life, when his hours and minutes were

precious in a mundane sense, he most readily, and without the least stint or grudge of objection, sacrificed hours and hours, month after month, in order to compile a work from which no great credit could be added to his name or fame, and did so simply from pure love of what he thought beautiful and pure. And certainly his love for that kind of music was very great. I can hardly say whether the study of Sebastian Bach led him to his great love for those simple solemn strains, or whether the chorales led him to an increased love of Sebastian Bach; but never have I come across any one who, with so great a knowledge of his art, was able to enter so precisely, so readily, and yet so intellectually into the simplicity of the ancient modes and tones, and into those simple strains which he helped to bring home to England in the Chorale-Book. Mr. Pye has referred to the Royal Academy of Music, and Mr. O'Leary has given a sketch of Sir Sterndale Bennett's connection with it. What I have said before, applies entirely to my connection there with him as the Principal of the institution. Whatever was desirable and right—whatever could raise the Academy which he loved just as has been described to us—whatever raised the standard and tone of the institution, *that* was his wish and his aim, and as far as was in his power he tried to enforce it; and I believe that, although he was not very demonstrative in language, his influence was great, because the students felt the influence, and the professors, as far as could be required, felt his influence and earnestness also. There is only one other word that I wish to add, and it is to express entire concurrence in the proposal which Mr. O'Leary made at the end of his paper. I should be so glad if this meeting, before dispersing, would consider whether it would not redound both to the honour of his name and to the honour of the musical art of this country, if a collection such as we possess in a most beautiful form of Sebastian Bach and Mendelssohn, of Beethoven and Mozart, if a like edition of Sterndale Bennett's works, complete, uniform, and correctly edited, were brought out.

The Chairman.—I think we have present also a very great friend of the late Sir Sterndale Bennett, Mr. Lamborn Cock. I wish he would say a few words.

Some autographs and other interesting memorials of Sir Sterndale Bennett were exhibited by Mr. Lamborn Cock.

The Chairman.—We have only now, I think, to ask a vote of thanks to our lecturer, Mr. O'Leary. He has had a most charming subject to deal with, and I am perfectly sure that there is no one here who will not revere for ever the memory of Sir Sterndale Bennett. We always considered him a great honour to our country, and any of those who have taken up his music are sure to derive an immense amount of pleasure, because it is intellectual and, being intellectual, it is lasting.

May 1, 1882.

G. A. OSBORNE, Esq.,

Vice-President, in the Chair.

SOME REMARKS ON RICHARD WAGNER'S MUSIC DRAMA "TRISTAN UND ISOLDE."

By H. F. Frost, Esq.

It can neither be expected nor desired that unanimity of opinion should prevail among the members of the Musical Association with regard to the novel views and daring procedure of such an exceptional man as Richard Wagner, whose artistic utterances are at this moment exciting so much attention among us. But because these matters are now being discussed with an earnestness from which the unhealthy warmth of partisanship and prejudice is not altogether absent, no apology is needed for directing the attention of this assemblage to the subject of the present paper. It may be as well, however, to explain that when I undertook to lay before you some of the impressions derived from a patient study of Wagner's "Tristan und Isolde," I was unaware that a still greater work by the same hand would be placed before the London musical public this season. But a little reflection convinced me that the choice I had made would still be the most appropriate. In the first place, the subject of "Der Ring des Nibelungen" is too vast to be dealt with in the scope of a paper of reasonable length. Again, it has already received the most copious treatment by writers of commanding ability, and any additional remarks from me would be scarcely less than an impertinence. And lastly "Tristan und Isolde" is no less representative of its author's genius, presenting the peculiarities of his system in their fullest development, though with greater conciseness and, it may be added, with more undeviating consistency than in the tetralogy. The main features of Wagner's art work are now fairly understood, and it is unnecessary to dilate upon them, at any rate to the present audience. But even now the literary phases of his music-dramas are not fully appreciated, and I may be pardoned for

deprecating in advance the kind of criticism which "Tristan und Isolde" is likely to receive in some quarters. When we are gravely informed that the poem of the "Nibelungs' Ring" is merely a fairy story in which giants, dwarfs, dragons, and other ridiculous creatures figure—the philosophical system which is here treated allegorically being ignored—there is danger that the libretto of "Tristan" may be termed a hideously immoral book, worthy to compare in mischievous tendencies with the worst drama of Dumas *fils* or his imitators on the modern French stage. For this reason, as well as on account of the intrinsic significance of the poem itself, I must devote a considerable portion of my remarks to considerations other than purely musical. In order to gauge the value of Wagner's treatment of the old legend it is necessary to compare it with other versions of the same subject. The germ of this, as of kindred fables of the Middle Ages, is lost in obscurity; and to trace the multiform varieties of the story which have existed in countries remote from each other would be beside the present purpose. We may content ourselves with commencing from the Welsh Arthurian legends, which have their origin in the fifth century, and after undergoing a process of evolution, growth and condensation, were collected and recapitulated by that most veracious old chronicler Geoffrey of Monmouth, in his "Historia Britonum," A.D. 1130 and 1147. Meanwhile, however, the stories concerning Arthur and his knights had crossed the channel into Brittany, where they took deep root; and later still into Germany. Of the French writers the earliest is Chrétien de Troyes, who flourished some time in the eleventh century, and among whose poems was one entitled "Tristan, ou le Roi Marc et la Reine Iseult." This, unfortunately, is lost, and we come next to the most important of the German versions, by Gottfried of Strasburg, about 1210. His "Tristan und Isolt" is a poem of 19,552 short rhymed lines; but, notwithstanding its length, it is unfinished, the hero being left soliloquising in his home in Brittany. Gottfried was highly esteemed; and, as in other and more modern instances, writers less gifted than himself essayed to take up his parable. But these sequels by Ulrich von Türheim (1236) and Heinrich von Freiburg (1270) are greatly inferior to the original. Gottfried's poem has been rendered in modern German, and published both in Leipzig and Stuttgart. The version of Thomas of Ercildoune, or Thomas the Rhymer, will be familiar to readers of Sir Walter Scott. The story of Tristan attributed to Luce de Gast was published at Rouen in 1489, and a copy of this edition is in the British Museum.

I need not stay to mention other writers who have dealt with the subject prior to Sir Thomas Malory, whose grand prose-poem "La Morte d'Arthur," printed by Caxton in 1485,

includes a complete biography of the ill-fated lovers, among other personages intimately associated with the Round Table. No fresh material of importance was subsequently engrafted on the primitive legendary matter; and we can now proceed to gather up the various threads of the narrative, and, by comparing them with Wagner's book, be enabled to form a correct estimate of the poetic and philosophical import of his novel treatment of this time-worn theme. Waving minor differences in points of detail, the main adventures in the career of Tristan and Iseult may be summarised as follows: The knight was the son of Meliodas, King of Liones, and Elizabeth, sister to King Mark of Cornwall. His mother died in giving him birth, and hence his name. Early in life he showed a chivalrous spirit in many ways, and an opportunity quickly presented itself for displaying his valour. King Anguish of Ireland sent Sir Marhaus, brother to his queen, to Cornwall for tithes, but Tristan, indignant at this insult, repaired at once to his uncle's court, was made knight at his own request, and fought Sir Marhaus, mortally wounding him, but receiving also a wound with a poisoned spear. A portion of Tristan's sword was left in the skull of Sir Marhaus, and this was preserved by the Irish queen with the idea of future revenge. Meanwhile Tristan, finding his hurt incurable, journeyed in disguise and under the name of Tramtrist to Ireland, to try the surgical skill of the Princess known as La Beale Isoud. She effected a cure, and a mutual attachment was springing up between physician and patient, when the indignant queen-mother discovered in the pretended Tramtrist the slayer of her kinsman, and he was hardly permitted to depart with his life. His feeling for Iseult could not have been very deep, for he quickly engaged in other amorous adventures, in some of which his conduct cannot be viewed in a favourable light. His uncle Mark, thinking to be rid of him, sent him again to Ireland to demand for himself the hand of La Beale Isoud in marriage. But this time Tristan managed to ingratiate himself with King Anguish by certain acts of valour, and was permitted to take the Princess as bride for his uncle. On the voyage the pair happened to drink, entirely by accident, a love-potion provided by the queen-mother for Iseult and her future husband. The result was to intensify the maiden's passion for Tristan, and to revive his feeble flame for her. After the marriage they continued to meet each other, and eventually they fled from the castle and lived for a while in the forest. But owing to the machinations of Tristan's cousin, Sir Andred, they were discovered, and the guilty knight was again wounded with a poisoned weapon. This time La Beale Isoud could not cure him, but advised him to seek the services of Isoud la Blanche Mains, daughter of King Howel of Brittany. This he did, and after winning favour at the

French king's court married the white-handed Isoud, almost forgetting her namesake in Cornwall. When this came to the ears of the latter she was highly indignant, but despatched messengers to her false lover, who then deserted his wife and returned secretly to Cornwall, where at the sight of La Beale Isoud his old feelings were rekindled. Afterwards he went through a variety of adventures of no great import so far as our present purpose is concerned, but eventually he was slain by Mark, and Isoud, it is said, quickly followed him to the grave, dying literally of a broken heart.

Now in this narrative it will be noted that Tristan is by no means an ideal hero; he has some ill-developed notion of honour, but none whatever of morality, nor even of constancy. Wagner's Tristan is, on the contrary, the very soul of chivalry previous to drinking the potion—a knight *sans peur et sans reproche*. Regarding Iseult little change has been deemed necessary; she remains the same proud, passionate, impulsive woman depicted in the old legends. But Wagner has immeasurably heightened these attributes of her nature by causing her to desire death with her secretly beloved enemy rather than tamely live as the consort of King Mark. In the last-named character we note a fundamental alteration. In the ancient versions, with scarcely an exception, he is represented as a treacherous friend, an unscrupulous monarch, and a poltroon. Our modern poet shows him, on the contrary, as a man weak indeed, and in the decay of whatever mental powers he may have ever possesed, but not despicable in any sense; and remarkable for one absorbing feeling—his unbounded affection for and confidence in his nephew Tristan. Through all there pulsates a lofty sense of morality utterly unknown to the characters of the mediæval story, but foiled and nullified by the decrees of a mastering and resistless fate. In saying this I must not be considered as acquiescing in the doctrine of an unconquerable destiny as here laid down. My object is merely to lay bare what I conceive to be the motive and mainspring of the drama as imagined and elaborated by Wagner. The metre of his verse is a curious mixture of the old alliterative style with rhymed lines. As to the advantages of alliterative verse for musical purposes much might be said, and also something on the other side. To my own thinking it is admirable for the expression of force, anger, or strong passion; but less so for the display of tenderness and pathos. I may explain that the extracts from the poem which I shall give you are from a translation by Mr. Alfred Forman, who kindly lent me his manuscript for the purpose. Having thus prepared the ground, it is only necessary further to say a few words on the musical construction of the work before proceeding to analyse it in order and detail. In "Tristan and Isolde" the composer has thrown aside definitely and unflinchingly

the laws of form which were once as carefully observed in opera as in other species of composition. In place thereof we have the system of leading themes adopted in its fullest extent, the music consisting of some thirty motives turned and twisted in every conceivable way. For be it observed that the system does not consist merely in identifying characters and ideas with corresponding musical phrases, and there an end. The meaning and sentiment of a motive may be modified or altered by subjecting it to augmentation or diminution; by changing it from duple to triple measure or from the major to the minor mode. Contrapuntal ingenuity is further exercised by the appearance of two or more of these melodies simultaneously. In fact this score may be said to form a gigantic musical mosaic, every bar of which is finished with the most consummate care—padding, in the usual musical sense of that term, having no place in the scheme. Continuity is strictly preserved, scarcely a full close occurring from the first note to the last of each act. The instruments required are the same as in "Lohengrin," the wood-wind being employed in threes instead of pairs for the sake of obtaining complete harmony in every shade of orchestral colour. The introduction, which has been heard frequently in our concert-rooms, is a curiously constructed piece, apparently rhapsodical and formless, but really teeming with ingenuity and the evidence of forethought. The motive on which it is based is that of the fatal love-potion, but various phrases are engrafted on this, one signifying the personality of Tristan, another the longing of the unfortunate pair, and another fate or death. The music is characterised by intense passionate yearning, gradually rising to a climax when the full orchestra delivers the love theme *fortissimo*, and then dying away in sad throbbing accents, which sink to rest on the dominant of C minor.

The raising of the curtain discloses the veiled retreat of Isolde on board the vessel that is conveying her to King Marke. The handmaid and companion Brangäne, who is an embodiment of light-minded impulsiveness and foolish amiability, is characteristically peering through the curtains watching the sailors at their work, while Isolde's head is buried in her hands as in profound grief. A young sailor (tenor voice) sings a wild unaccompanied melody of his home and his love in Ireland. One phrase of this may be denominated the sea-motive, and is employed sometimes in graceful three-four measure, and at others in more jovial duple time. His song rouses Isolde to transports of rage, much to Brangäne's astonishment, while the sea-motive is worked in the stormiest fashion. At her mistress's request Brangäne draws the curtains aside, and the deck of the vessel is displayed, with the lordly figure of Tristan near the helm. Gazing at him, Isolde invokes death on them both, and a new striking phrase is

heard for the first time. Then, as if in sudden impulse, she directs her maid to command Tristan to her presence. It may be here noted that whenever Brangäne speaks the music becomes peaceful and soothing, in complete contrast to the agitated strains that accompany Isolde's utterances. The damsel departs on her errand, and Isolde watches the result. The heart-stricken but honourable knight replies that a sense of duty must keep him away from his uncle's bride; but on the request being reiterated in a more commanding tone, his retainer Kurwenal, who maintains throughout a rough, dog-like devotion to his master, springs up, and in a tone of contemptuous banter refers to the fate of the Irish envoy, Morold, whom Tristan slew. The music of this speech is bold and strongly nautical in flavour, the sailors shouting approval of Kurwenal's words. But Isolde has overheard all, and now in a lengthy address unfolds to her attendant the story of her love and wounded pride. Musically this section might almost be termed a *scena*, though it is formed chiefly on a two-bar phrase repeated with numberless modifications, and each time with greater effect. This faculty of growth is one of the most remarkable evidences of Wagner's genius. A motive which may not appear very striking at a first hearing, so far from palling on the ear, becomes more and more eloquent and impressive at every repetition, the present scene affording a salient example of this strange power. In a dramatic and also in a psychological sense the narration is of the highest import. The emotions which sway the heroine may be comprehended as she tells how, when Tristan was at her father's court, wounded and helpless, the notched sword betrayed him as the slayer of her kinsman; and how she rushed with the weapon to avenge herself and her land. She says—

From where he rested
  rose his look,—
  not on the sword,
  not on my hand—
my eyes were all he heeded.
  With his wretchedness
  reached he my heart:
the sword, I found, had fallen.

To these words is allotted appropriately enough the motive of longing; but that of rage and anger returns when Isolde complains bitterly how Tristan showed his gratitude for her healing art by returning to claim her, not for himself, but for his uncle. It may be noted that her description of Marke as "Kornwall's müden König" (Cornwall's weary king) indicates the character of that personage, as we shall see further on. The princess ends this magnificent declamatory piece by invoking death upon herself and Tristan. Again Brangäne, in beautifully melodious accents, endeavours to quiet her, referring

to the magic potions provided by her mother for use in case of need. Isolde grimly commands her to prepare one of them —a death-draught—the orchestra of course illustrating this colloquy by reiterations of the love and death-motives. Then Kurwenal enters hurriedly to announce the end of the voyage, while the sea-motive in its liveliest guise, and the cheerful "Ho, heave ho!" of the sailors without, form a sharp contrast to the preceding music. Isolde replies by again requesting the attendance of Tristan, and Kurwenal promises to deliver her message. During his brief absence Brangäne expostulates with her mistress, but without avail, and Tristan is abruptly announced. His entrance is signalised by a striking phrase delivered *fortissimo* by the brass, and evidently suggestive of the heroic nature of the man. This figure, evolved from an idea in the prelude to the work, continues to be heard frequently during the succeeding scene. But the dramatic interest now for the time overpowers the musical, though the latter does not slacken in the slightest degree. While Isolde persuades Tristan that nothing less than his life will atone for the death of Morold, the foregoing themes are used with stormy energy, until at last the knight, influenced of course by his hitherto smothered feelings, agrees to the sacrifice demanded by the enraged princess, and takes from her hand the presumed poisonous cup. But Brangäne, regardless of everything save the life of her beloved mistress, has contrived to substitute the love-philtre. As Tristan lifts the goblet to his lips the death-motive is heard; but when Isolde snatches it from him and drains what is left, the full orchestra delivers the love theme with tremendous force. Then there is an eloquent pause in the action, while the music describes the gradual working of the irresistible potion. Pride and despair are on the faces of both at first as they stand gazing at each other; but the anticipated death comes not; their hearts beat quicker, the hot blood rushes to their cheeks, the feelings which both have hitherto kept under restraint become uncontrollable, and each murmuring the name of the other, they sink into a long embrace. But at this moment shouts are heard without; the vessel has arrived off the coast, and the joyous cries of the sailors mingle with the love melody, now extended and worked up with ever-increasing passion and ecstasy. The curtains are withdrawn, and the castle of Tintagil is seen, while all on board are bustling with preparations for the reception of King Marke, who is coming to greet his bride. Brangäne, stricken with remorse for what she has done, brings her mistress's robes and tries to awaken her to a sense of the situation. No words can describe the thrilling effects of the music of this climax to the act, because nothing resembling it has ever been done before. While the musician must admire the technical skill shown in the employment of several of the leading motives contrapuntally, to the ordinary hearer this

finale must convey the idea of tremendous emotional power; and a sense of fatigue must ensue when the curtain falls on the combined representation of human passion in its most intense form and the more ordinary sentiments of loyalty and patriotism as here portrayed. Other composers have imagined brilliant and stirring *ensembles*, but in the whole range of opera no episode with which I am acquainted is comparable with this for variety of resource, towering command over every means employed, and surging resistless energy.

Wagner allows the jaded faculties of his audience no immediate repose, for the second act opens in the stormiest fashion. A new motive of four notes only is heard at once, on a crashing major seventh, and signifying the searching light of day, which to the lovers has now become hateful. Then, on the dominant of B flat, another figure appears, suggestive of Tristan's impatience, to which is shortly added a third of a wildly beseeching character, signifying Isolde's love summons. Then abruptly changing to the key of A flat, a fourth theme, restless and agitated, portrays the joy of reunion. At length a dominant pedal in B flat is again reached, and the curtain rises on the garden of Marke's Castle by night, with Isolde's apartments on the left. A torch is burning at the door, the extinction of which is to be the signal that Tristan may approach. While the drum maintains a piano F the horns of Marke and his huntsmen are heard in the distance. There are six horns, all in F, and the effect as the strains ascend from the valley is pleasing to the general hearer, though not so to Isolde, who is impatient for the departure of the chase. Her impulsiveness is checked by Brangäne, who with her womanly quickwittedness has noted the demeanour of Melot, Tristan's false friend, and thus warns her fate-impelled mistress:—

> Deem'st thou thy blindness
> darkens the world,
> And saves your ways from its sight?
> When here on board the ship
> from Tristan's shivering hand
> the bloodless bride
> hardly beheld,
> Now called her Marke the king;
> when all for thy step,
> as it staggered, had eyes.
> When the king with kindness
> mildly was moved,
> the toils of the length of sea
> thou hadst suffered aloud to soothe—
> One watcher alone
> I lit upon well,
> who for Tristan alone was wakeful.

Isolde, however, is deaf to the voice of warning, and after more converse, in which the themes just named appear in

endless variety of form and modification, together with a new and graceful love-motive, she seizes the torch and bids her attendant haste to the watch-tower. Furious chromatic scales and a *fortissimo* delivery of the death-motive mark the extinguishing of the light, and then there is a momentary lull. The motives of Tristan's impatience and Isolde's love-summons re-enter quietly at first, but with steadily increasing force and agitation. The bewitched princess sees her lover in the distance, and waves her handkerchief to him, while the orchestra is lashed into a state of frantic excitement, one figure of four notes being repeated no less than forty times in succession. At length the enamoured pair rush madly into each other's arms, and then ensues a scene of sheer rhapsody, alike in a literary and musical sense. The lovers indulge in a succession of meaningless and disjointed epithets of endearment, while the orchestra continues its furious course, the new love-theme mentioned above being the basis of this torrent of sound. Here we have a remarkable illustration of the union which according to Wagner should exist between poetry and music. Each constituent of the present scene taken by itself is preposterous in the strongest degree; united they afford an extraordinarily graphic presentment of the situation. Now commences that wonderful duet which has won such unstinted eulogium for its musical beauty, but which has also drawn upon Wagner the most virulent abuse for its alleged immorality. This is not the place to discuss what constitutes a moral or an immoral tendency in dramatic work, but I would beg impartial observers to suspend their judgment until after personal examination into the matter. In the first place, there is absolutely nothing in Wagner's book to show that the marriage between King Marke and Isolde has been consummated, while there is circumstantial evidence to the contrary, as we shall see at the end of the tragedy. Again, the duet is not merely an outpouring of vehement passion; after the first transports its language becomes more subtle in its meaning, more mystical and tragic. The symbolical import of the scene—and, indeed, of the entire drama—is introduced with much skill and delicacy. Naturally the conversation of the lovers turns upon the signal given by Isolde which brings about their reunion—namely, the extinguishing of the torch. Light to them is therefore the symbol of separation, and darkness that of joy in reunion. But Tristan attaches a deeper meaning to the idea: in life they can have no real happiness; only in the darkness of death can their love receive its full and perfect consecration. The expansion of this sentiment occupies a considerable time, and it is necessary to speak of its musical illustration, in which Wagner has risen to heights of ideal expression never imagined by any previous composer. For some time the music consists of a species of magic net-

work of motives, the analysis of which reveals ingenuity of the most astounding description, though the motion is rapid and continuous; and to the ordinary hearer the idea of mere rhapsodising might be conveyed, rather than of concentration of thought on the minutest details. As it proceeds, the day-motive gradually assumes a quieter and more subdued character, signifying in this modified form the calm and gloom of night. The stream of harmony becomes more and more soothing and melodious, though an occasional burst of passion shows the agitated feelings that still prevail. At last a new and voluptuous treatment of the reunion-motive occurs in the key of A; the basses descend gently semitone by semitone from D to the E flat below, where everything is withdrawn save the violins, violas, and cellos. These, muted and divided into eight parts, commence to pulsate in tender syncopations, while the wood and horns steal in with sustained harmonies in the faintest *pianissimo*. Thus commences that wonderful passage, "O sink hernieder, Nacht der liebe," which occurs to every one who knows the work as the most characteristic feature of the whole scene. The melody, harmonies, and colouring of this episode are equally strange, thrilling, and beautiful. When exhaustion supervenes, and the pair lapse into silence—not on a full close, but on the second inversion of a chord of the major ninth—Brangäne's warning voice is heard from her lonely post. Here the sweeping passages for the harp, the endless divisions of the strings, and the effect of the extreme low notes—some of the basses having their E string tuned down to C sharp—increase the weirdness of the *ensemble*, the mass of sound being extraordinarily full and rich, though dreamy and subdued. When Brangäne's song dies away, a new and very lovely melody, in which the death-motive is blended, is announced by the orchestra. This may be denominated the slumber-motive, though its significance is not so plainly apparent as that of some of the previous figures. It recurs, however, frequently, and eventually gives way to another and most important theme. This is the death-song, which in the form that it appears at the conclusion of the work is already familiar to concert-goers. Here also it is worked up at considerable length, though with simpler accompaniment and less passionate expression. Rising at length to a climax, the dominant seventh of B changes abruptly to the first inversion of the supertonic minor ninth in the same key, with the root in an upper part. This crashing discord, given *fortissimo*, announces the entrance of Marke, the traitor Melot, and a number of retainers, the faithful Kurwenal arriving too late to warn his master of the impending danger. After some subsidiary business comes the lengthy reproving speech of Marke which has formed a stumbling-block for the majority of critics. The only objection that I can see to it is a purely musical one;

in a dramatic, or still more in a psychological sense, it seems appropriate and masterly. It has been said that for the outraged monarch to stand tamely by and expostulate with the betrayer of his honour is absurd and contrary to reason. That may be admitted, as it was equally weak and foolish in King Lear to blind himself to the worth of Cordelia. The character of the Cornish prince is well indicated in these lines, selected from his long address. Speaking of himself he says—

> Seemed he too little
> thanks to say,
> when what thou hadst won him—
> realm and fame—
> as thy heirdom freely he owned?
> Whom childless his wife
> had left in woe;
> he loved thee so
> that never more
> had Mark' a will to marry.
> When fast his folk
> of throne and field,
> with prayers and threats
> upon him pressed
> a queen amid his kingdom:
> a mate by his side to settle.
> When thou thyself
> besought'st him so,
> with craft his heart
> made he not hard
> till, Tristan, thou hadst threatened
> no longer his throne
> and land to heed,
> wert thou thyself
> not sent with speed
> to seek him the bride by sea?
> And so he bade it be.

These are the utterances of a man who, dead to the ambitions and pleasures of the world, finds himself sorely wounded in the one remaining spot where he was susceptible to pain. He is too much crushed to do more than ask, in deeply pathetic accents, "Why this to me?" Thus considered, Marke's attitude is both logical and beautiful, and it may be said that he affords one of the best examples of Wagner's powers of characterisation. But from a musical point of view there can be no question that the intrusion of the episode is exceedingly unfortunate. After being thrilled to one's inmost fibres by the preceding music, this declamatory and lugubrious though dignified solo cannot be otherwise regarded than as a serious anticlimax, and a proof of the impossibility of always uniting the poetic and musical interest in a lyric drama. In answer to his uncle's pleading Tristan replies sadly that he can offer no explanation of his conduct, a soft utterance of the love-potion theme meanwhile furnishing the audience with the

required answer. Turning to Isolde he asks her if she is ready to follow him to the dark and sunless land whither he is going, the slumber and death-motives indicating his meaning. She expresses her willingness, and this arouses the jealous Melot to fury. After a few stern and bitter words from Tristan the two knights engage in combat, but the hero at once drops his guard and falls severely wounded, though Marke makes a move to save him. In this abrupt fashion the act comes to a conclusion, and the dazed listener is left to collect his shattered thoughts. A volume might be written on the wonders and beauties of this act, but I must hurry on to consider the remainder of the tragedy.

The scene is now shifted to Tristan's castle on the coast of Brittany, whither the wounded man has been conveyed by Kurwenal, who when the curtain rises is watching over him as he lies asleep in the garden. Nothing could be more dismal than the opening in F minor, and the effect of gloom and sadness is intensified by the dreary piping of a herdsman without. The instrument used is the noble but melancholy corno inglese, and the time is almost supernaturally weird and dolorous. After forty bars of this, the orchestra steals in and repeats the most prominent figure, while the herdsman appears and inquires how fares the sufferer. In the succeeding conversation we learn that Kurwenal has sent for Isolde, whose skill was the means of saving Tristan's life on a former occasion; and he bids the piper keep watch and announce the approach of a vessel by a lively ditty. Tristan now recovers consciousness, and asks many questions, the tenderness and single-hearted disposition of Kurwenal being shown in his replies. His comforting words are illustrated by a new cheerful and melodious theme in six-four time, the contrast between the unaffected music that accompanies him, and the yearning strains made up of the now familiar love-themes that ebb and flow when the fate-stricken hero speaks, being remarkably striking. The climax of Tristan's passionate outburst is marked by an intensely pathetic recurrence of the reunion motive, an appropriate reply to his agonised question as to when calm and quiet will arrive for him. Later on he raves, fancying he sees the ship approaching, and then the plaintive air of the shepherd returns and reminds him of his childhood and early sorrows, associated as the air was with the death of his parents :—

So to me must thou mean
thou old bewailing sound
that ail'st me like sorrow's words?—
By breath of evening
  idly borne
in childhood first,
my father's death it followed;

in mist of morning
drearily muffled,
later amid
my mother's lot it moaned.
When he begot me and died—
when birth by death she gave.

The accompaniment to these lines, and more in the same vein, is unutterably dismal. The strings maintain a chromatic descending *tremolo*, while the shepherd's theme is persistently heard in the orchestra in a variety of keys, and associated with other motives which are given in more or less distorted fashion. At length Tristan swoons, after delivering a fearful curse on the magic love-potion; but in a brief space he revives and dwells less despairingly on Isolde—another phase of agitation more pleasurable in its nature occurring here, until at last we are landed on a dominant pedal in the key of C, when a joyous phrase is heard without from the shepherd's pipe. It is the signal that the ship is in sight; the wounded man hears the sound and recognises its meaning; the orchestra takes up the figure, and there is a sense of hurry and expectation, rising gradually to a state of delirious excitement. Kurwenal, bidding his master remain quietly on the couch, rushes down to the shore, his departure being the direct cause of the catastrophe. For the longing Tristan when left to himself cannot control his impatience, and with painful realism tears off the bandages that confine his limbs. The orchestra pours forth a rhapsodical torrent of the love themes in three-four, four-four, and five-four measure; the voice of Isolde is heard without; Tristan endeavours to rush forward to meet her, and then with terrible force the death-motive rings out, and the ill-fated knight falls dying in his mistress's arms. His last whispered word is "Isolde," and the orchestra tells us in eloquent tones that love is stronger than death. After a frantic outburst of grief, in which a new theme of lamentation is mingled touchingly with other motives, Isolde swoons on the body, and then the herdsman rushes in to say that another vessel is in sight. Fearing he knows not what, Kurwenal endeavours to bar the gate, and has fairly succeeded, when Marke, Melot, Brangäne, and followers arrive. The King has come with no evil intent, but his men make a forcible entry, and Kurwenal and Melot both fall in the encounter. Gazing upon the prostrate bodies, Marke and the handmaiden explain the purport of their journey. The latter, calling upon Isolde, speaks thus:—

Happy tidings,
have I to tell!
What forbids thee to trust Brangäne?
On her blindfold blame
forgiveness she brings;
thou hardly wert gone

when in haste she came to the king:
the love-water's secret
soon as he learned,
with unsparing speed
to sea he sprang,
again to get thee,
then to forego thee,
and give thee forth to his friend.

To which Marke adds:—

What means, Isolde,
this to me?
As soon as clearly I saw,
what before I could not fathom,
how blest I felt to find
my friend from blame was free.
To him I loved
wholly to lose thee,
with brimming sails
I followed thy boat.

Isolde heeds them not, but, rising to her feet, commences that wonderful death-song which, joined to the prelude of the opera, has been performed as an instrumental piece at the Richter Concerts and elsewhere. It is mainly a repetition of the last section of the great love duet in the second act, but the accompaniment is more diversified, more suggestive of highest ecstasy and yearning. The music rises to a climax on the dominant of B, and then the reunion theme, delivered in a new form and *fortissimo*, gives the key to the scene, and, indeed, to the entire drama. As Isolde's life ebbs gently away this beautiful figure pulsates with diminishing force but increasing tenderness, while the upward arpeggios seem to denote the flight of her spirit to the realms where love is immortal. Those who have only heard this music in the concert-room can have no idea of its overwhelming effect when given in its proper place. It is a worthy crown and peroration to one of the most stupendous efforts of genius in art the world has ever produced.

Some who have followed these remarks with exemplary patience, may not unreasonably be of opinion that in describing certain portions of this phenomenal work the language of extravagant eulogium has been employed, since a lyric drama containing scenes of such unique power and beauty should long ere this have surely won unanimous favour wherever music is cultivated as an art. The answer to this presumed objection must be that the composer has undoubtedly rendered the acceptance of his work exceedingly difficult by his uncompromising adherence to a system involving a continuous strain on the intellectual faculties which very few can bear. When the curtain has fallen, and the last throbs of Isolde's death-song have died away, the hearer is conscious of a mental exhaustion that may have been partly caused by intense emotional pleasure, but

which is in itself more akin to pain. It remains to be asked, then, Can a creation of such vastness and complexity be accepted as a model for the opera of the future? The answer must be unhesitatingly in the negative. The influence of Wagner's art-work may be highly beneficial in teaching composers to adopt more serious views of their duties, to avoid meretricious effects, and to bear in mind that opera is not solely musical in its full realisation, and that the sole end and aim of the artist should be to appeal to the cultured, not to the illiterate. But it would be disastrous were every talented young musician to make it his endeavour to commence where Wagner has left off. It has been my lot to examine several important compositions, not only German but English, in which the aim has been apparently to avoid a lucid eight-bar phrase, a full close, or more than two diatonic harmonies in succession; and these by musicians who might have risen higher than respectable mediocrity with due restraint of their o'erweening ambition. But while deprecating the general employment of the Wagner system in its entirety, as certain to lead to results exceedingly disastrous to the best interests of music, it is surely possible to regard the expression of monumental genius with befitting respect and admiration. To adopt a simple metaphor, those are foolhardy who attempt to scale Mont Blanc without the requisite physical strength and proper training; but the grandeur of the mountain may be acknowledged even by those who contemplate it from a distance. In addressing an audience of musicians I hope I shall not be considered presumptuous in urging any who intend being present at the forthcoming representations of "Tristan und Isolde" to devote a portion of their leisure to the perusal of the score. It may safely be said that a feast of wonder and delight awaits any who are sufficiently interested to take this course. Familiarity will in this case certainly not breed contempt, but rather will lead to a realisation of the infinite beauty, subtlety, and exhaustless fertility of device contained in the work. That which seems new, strange, and inexplicable at first, will in time be recognised as essential to the unity and completeness of the one great design; the only danger being that the cool impartiality of the inquirer will give place to the unreasoning enthusiasm of the partisan. I may perhaps be accused, not without reason, of having fallen into this error, and I cannot therefore more fitly conclude than by recommending you not to accept in faith anything that has been said, but to submit the matter to your own independent and more enlightened judgment.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN.—Ladies and gentlemen: I think I may take it for granted, from the applause that has been given to the paper, that you are as much delighted with it as I have been myself. I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Frost at Bayreuth, for I went to that great festival. I must explain, when I say I saw him, that it was very imperfectly, for my right eye was blinded entirely, owing to the mosquitoes, at Darmstadt. However, I am able to identify him as the gentleman who was there, for we came home together. I heard the music of the "Nibelungen," and I must say with a great deal of it I was very much delighted. I think I heard about fourteen or fifteen hours of music, and I enjoyed about two-and-a-half hours out of that time. Of course that is my own experience only. I was not able to attain the great height which I could have wished. However, I have already secured my seat for the first cycle of this "Nibelungen Ring," because I want to see what kind of sympathy I shall have with the giant and the dragon; for I candidly confess I had not much sympathy with them when at Bayreuth. I have no great fondness for mythological subjects—but that, again, is my ignorance. One remark of Mr. Frost's is a very excellent one. He has spoken, as a great friend and admirer of Wagner, with a great deal of modesty; he said that which I perfectly agreed with—that Wagner should not be considered by young musicians as the basis for superstructure. He is to be admired by them, and a great many things taken from him if they can do it; but I must say that I am as yet too much of a conservative—talking of conservatives in a musical sense. I see some Wagnerians here whom I look upon as musical radicals, and some conservatives, and I hope we shall see them breaking their lances while we look on and see fair play. Wagner has certainly been a most prolific writer, as may be seen by a catalogue of his works which are published as well as those which are not; for instance, Mr. Dannreuther, in a volume entitled "Richard Wagner and his Tendencies and Theories," which I was looking at before I came here, says he projected an immense work which he describes as a concoction made up of "Hamlet" and "King Lear" on an absurdly grand scale. Forty-two of the actors died in the course of it, and he was obliged to make a number of them return as ghosts so as to keep the last act sufficiently stocked with *dramatis personæ*. I happened to take this book down by chance, and being very much amused by this I thought I would bring it here and read it to you. It took him two years and a-half to lay the plan of this great tragedy, and if he had composed music to it, and if

it had been performed, I want to know how long it would have taken. It certainly does take some time to bury forty-two men, and then you must reinter the ghosts. Whether there was to be another "Nibelungen" or not I do not know.

Mr. SHEDLOCK.—I would merely ask Mr. Frost whether, in the few remarks he made at the commencement, I understood him rightly that Sir Walter Scott's poem was by Thomas of Erceldoune. I believe there is a great deal of dispute as to the authorship of that poem. There were three Thomases: there was Thomas, the writer of the French novel, of Kinghorn; there was also Thomas of Britain, and there was also Thomas the Rhymer. To the best of my memory Thomas the Rhymer was the one quoted by Godfrey of Strassburg. There were three of these writers, and there is a good deal of dispute amongst those learned in the subject who was the author of this poem. I fancied Mr. Frost attributed it to Thomas of Erceldoune.

Mr. BARRY.—I can say, with reference to that, that in Scott's preface to "Sir Tristrem" he seems to have proved that Thomas of Erceldoune and Thomas of Britain were synonymous.

Mr. SHEDLOCK.—It was afterwards taken up in 1833 or 1834, and there were some articles published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* about it, but I believe the matter was not considered conclusively settled.

Mr. BARRY.—It is a matter you cannot come to any positive determination about, but I think the arguments Scott brought forward were pretty conclusive. Godfrey von Strassburg makes repeated allusion in his poem to Thomas of Britain, and he says many people have undertaken to recite the story of "Tristan and Isolde," but very few of them have done so aright because they have not followed Thomas of Britain's way of telling it. It seems that Godfrey von Strassburg's version agrees perfectly with that of Thomas of Erceldoune, except that there are seven stanzas in Godfrey's for one in Thomas of Erceldoune's. That seems pretty conclusive proof that Thomas of Erceldoune was synonymous with Thomas of Britain.

Mr. SHEDLOCK.—I only mean that that subject has been discussed since.

Mr. BARRY.—Of course, but it is not a subject on which you can now come to any definite determination. The evidence Scott brought forward seems to me to be pretty conclusive.

Mr. FROST.—I must explain that I have not read anything of later date on this particular point than Sir Walter Scott's preface in his own work.

Mr. FERDINAND PRAEGER.—All those who know me are fully aware that I agree entirely with the eulogy Mr. Frost has pronounced upon our great master, Richard Wagner. There-

fore, the only thing which might interest this meeting, without discussing whether he is a genius—which I think all Europe is now agreed upon—would be some account of how the opera was first begun. It was some twenty-five years ago. I was staying with Wagner at Zurich. I passed most of my holidays with him, and therefore I knew him intimately. After having worked in the morning we used to walk to the mountains, and one day he spoke of Godfrey von Strassburg, saying, "To-morrow I will read you something"—because my defective eyesight would not allow me to read long—so, sitting before the little Swiss châlet in the garden with his former wife, who has since died, he read me the very verses which have formed the groundwork of his new opera. When we sat at breakfast he always read the newspaper to his wife, and told her all kinds of ridiculous things. She was not a woman of very great intellect, but a most excellent, charming person; and she used to listen and say, "Oh, Richard, you are telling me falsehoods again!" All at once he dropped the paper, and I gave her a sign to cease talking. I saw him moving his lips, conning over something. We waited for a long while; I busied myself and did not speak a word, when all at once he began again and took up the paper. I said to him, "I know what you have been doing." "What?" he replied, "how can you?" "Ah," I said, "you have been composing the love-song you were talking of yesterday." "How do you know?" "I saw it by your moving lips." To which he replied, "You are right." Such was the embryo of the idea. I must tell you at the same time that he never looked out for a libretto, because, being so intimate with him, I asked him to write one, when he said, "I cannot; my librettos come only by chance. They all at once strike me." He had no idea previously of his libretto. It formed itself in his mind by degrees; indeed, I may tell you, he had not the slightest idea of making this work as it appeared, because at the same time he received an offer from the Emperor of the Brazils, who was extremely devoted to his music, to write an opera. He did not care for this, but said he would write at some time an opera "in which I will entirely discomfit those who attack me for want of melody" (and this attack was made against Beethoven when a boy, just as much as against Wagner)—"I will write an opera full of melody." This was the opera which he intended, and this shows how his genius would lead him in an entirely different direction; because, although I do not say there is not melody in it, it is melody high above the level of the common understanding, and it will want half a century before the great mass will understand it. In fact, as he once said to me, "I always must do the thing contrary to what I intend." I told him, for consolation, what Goethe says, "The genius is taken by the nape of the neck by the demon who

forces him to do what he must do." That is the surest proof of genius.

Mr. SOUTHGATE.—I am hardly prepared to speak on the subject, although perhaps if I had looked at some note-books of mine, I might have been able to say a few words upon it. It was my fortune or misfortune to have heard "Tristan und Isolde" in Berlin some five or six years ago. I had perhaps better say very little on the opera itself, because it has been so carefully and ably dissected by Mr. Frost, and his impressions of it are no doubt more correct than mine; but with his concluding remarks I entirely agree—it did produce on me a feeling of extreme weariness, though I fancy it was not exactly the kind of weariness to which our friend Mr. Frost alluded. When the opera began I tried to follow it as carefully as one usually does, and in the opening scene I succeeded pretty well; but very quickly that intense restlessness, of which Mr. Frost has spoken, seemed to infuse itself into me. I missed the full closes—I wanted the cadences of which he has spoken as being absent; and the music, I think I may say, instead of giving one a definite impression of a completed subject, went on in what one can only call a rambling way—the various motives were so jumbled up in the laborious orchestration that I could no longer detect them; eventually, indeed, I did not try to do so, and my only feeling was, that the sooner it was over the sooner my torture would be at an end. It was my misfortune, and possibly my fault also, but I can only say that before the end of the opera was reached I felt that the weariness of which he has spoken was complete, and I desired to hear no more. With regard to the work itself and its elaborate construction, I endeavoured to penetrate the mysteries of it, but did not succeed. No doubt that was likewise my misfortune; but I retired, certainly without being impressed with Wagner's power to illustrate a subject by means of these *leit*-motives or continuous *melos*. However that may be, I think we can find other works which do this, and yet are distinctly melodious. The restless harmonic progressions and ugly unvocal declamations of this opera certainly produced on me the weariness of which Mr. Frost has spoken. On the following day I proposed to go to the opera-house, but my wife, who was with me, said, "I think we have had enough." However, I did go—I was rash, perhaps—and I heard Spohr's "Jessonda"; the feeling which occurred at the end of that charming work was not weariness by any means.

The CHAIRMAN.—I think I may now ask for a few words from a solid conservative, and I will call on Mr. Stephens.

Mr. C. STEPHENS.—I think the matter has been so ably dealt with that I would rather not say much. I have not had sufficient opportunity to study the works of Wagner. That opportunity is

now about to arise, and I shall avail myself of it to endeavour to understand, and to enter fully into the beauties which I think may possibly be found below the surface. Those who dislike at first hearing the works of Wagner must nevertheless feel that when he is speaking they are listening to the utterances of a great mind. I think there can be not the least doubt that the enormous work that we are about to hear—this "Nibelungen"—on examination will be found to be masterly in every line of it, and even if the result may not be satisfactory altogether to some listeners, it must be that they have not yet quite penetrated into the inner meaning and full design of the author. I think a great work of art, if it is really a great work of art, requires great application to understand it. Its great merit is that it is exalted, and it requires an exalted understanding to do it justice.

The CHAIRMAN.—I think I will now ask you to give a vote of thanks to Mr. Frost for the paper he has given us; and I hope that all those who will probably hear for the first time on the operatic stage the works of Wagner will come out of the ordeal as I did at Bayreuth. I heard there some of the most delicious music I ever wish to hear, and I hope to hear much more of it when I become more acquainted with it.

The vote of thanks having been carried,

Mr. FROST said: I fully expected to have had a very great deal to answer, if indeed I had the power to answer the objections which I presumed would pour down on me, from all parts of the room, for the subject of my paper and the opinions I have expressed on this work of Wagner's. But I find that I have really very little to say indeed in reply to what has been expressed in the discussion. With regard to Mr. Southgate's impressions, derived from the performance of "Tristan" at Berlin, I can quite comprehend that, if he went to the opera on that occasion without having made a profound study of this work beforehand, his experiences must be as he stated. I may state that, when I heard this work for the first time, in Munich, in September, I had been through the score carefully two or three times beforehand, as a musician generally does, and I thought I knew all about it, but I found I really knew very little; and when I undertook to read a paper on the subject here, my intention at the outset was to treat the subject from a very conservative point of view—indeed, to speak of it as an extreme work—a strange, original work—having extraordinary beauties here and there, but so covered up and smothered with ugliness and incomprehensibilities of every description that it must be looked upon, not as a masterpiece, but as the mistake of a great man. But in preparing myself to read this paper, I of course took the score in hand, and the more I read the more I was amazed at its wonders. I have never opened it once without having discovered something

new, something marvellous in every page of it. Of course very few can give the same time and patience to a work as I have had to do in this instance, and for that reason I hope those who do hear "Tristan" at Drury Lane will not go away with the idea that the impression derived on that particular occasion will be lasting, and so lose the opportunity of hearing the work again. I beg to acknowledge, most sincerely, the vote of thanks you have accorded to me.

JUNE 5, 1882.

C. E. STEPHEN, ESQ.,

IN THE CHAIR.

FROM RHYTHMIC PULSATION TO CLASSICAL OUTLINE.

By HENRY HILES, Esq., Mus. Doc.

FROM time to time such able papers have been read before this Association upon the outlines of those patterns of musical works which have been generally accepted, and deemed worthy of classification and imitation, that I should not have ventured to reintroduce the subject this afternoon, except with a hope that we may be able to trace back those rules of construction which have been diligently sought out and adopted by generations of earnest musicians, until we arrive at some clue to the leading principles, some glimpse of the natural law, which must underlie all satisfactory artistic work. And it will be admitted that the subject is of great importance to all students of music. For now—certainly not less than at any former time—there is a kind of impatient, restless spirit about, which (seeking to escape from the labour of a life-long study of the deeper, less obvious, principles of art; or prompted by a supposition that in its higher flights, such a pure, imaginative, art as ours should be free from all restraint, and absolved from all obedience) makes light of the achievements of bygone musicians, and refuses to profit by the experience gained, and bequeathed to us, by generations of earnest workers. No one would be more reluctant than I should to submit to mere dogmatic restriction. In a modest cautious spirit every student should carefully weigh each proposition submitted to him before he admits it among the articles of his creed. Our harmony codes, and especially our rules of part-writing, require to be examined, brought into accordance with modern usage, and systematised. The possibilities of orchestral variety also open out a large field for useful experiment. For surely it would be much better that the early training of our young musicians should be directed to the analysis, blending, and contrast of the many different

qualities of tone which a modern orchestra affords than to restrict it to a cowardly imitation of a few favourite models. So long as the teacher of harmony condescends to excuse the many breakings of obsolete rules as the "licences of genius," the contrapuntist thinks it wise to enforce obedience to the crude maxims of an age ignorant of a chromatic scale, and our guides in orchestration continue to refer us to scores nearly a century old as the only models we may safely study, we shall not escape the sneers which it is thought may be safely cast upon musicians; and with which, of late, English musicians have been pretty liberally besprinkled. But it is my pleasant belief that a brighter era is dawning for English music than, for many generations, it has enjoyed; that the old love of song (which never died out among us) is bursting through the fetters which so long repressed it; and that even our ridiculous national spirit of self-depreciation may, at last, give place to a more healthy—though still modest—readiness to value that which is good and true, from whatever source—even the brain of an English musician—it springs. The spirit of inquiry which is now awakened (peering into the principles of our art, and testing its foundations) will, I think, convince us that the architectural schemes whereby the best musicians moulded their compositions could not have been so successful and so generally accepted as they have been, and are, did they not rest upon some irreversible truth; and that the discovery of that truth would (by removing those plans from an apparent dependence upon mere imaginary bases, and establishing their connection with, and reliance upon, natural law) enable us more fully to appreciate the labours of our great predecessors, afford us new insight of the beauty and value of their patient researches, and supply us with more confidence to foresee in what direction the true advance and development of their principles must tend. And I am the more hopeful that you will yield me your attention, even should you be inclined to think that I dwell too long upon rudimentary matters, because an audience of such experience in teaching must be fully convinced of the primary necessity of arriving at some foundation, some common ground of agreement, before any theoretical superstructure could usefully be attempted.

Music is a language of sustained sounds; and, while it ranges over a greater diversity of pitch than is usual, or indeed possible, in less impassioned speech, it differs from the language of ordinary intercourse even more through the greater duration than through the melodic inflection of its sounds. Its more essential characteristic may, therefore, be said to be the length, rather than the varied acuteness, or gravity of its syllables. It necessarily follows that time is the more important element in its construction. Now our perception of the lapse of time is always derived from a measure-

ment of its more minute divisions. We gain no idea of vast ranges of time except by mapping them out in sections. The clearest conception of long past ages, and their influences, is acquired by counting the intermediate generations which link us to our remote forerunners. Our lives are mere agglomerations of years, of days, of minutes, of seconds. And the true measurement or pulsation of music is as distinct, regular, and pendular, as are the vibrations by which its sounds are formed, and as the tickings of a clock, whereby the lapse of time is measured and chronicled.

There is such a strict regularity in the march of song, that probably there is no unmechanical mode of reckoning the passage of time more exact than the onward flow of music. A succession of sustained sounds of different pitch must be governed by rhythmic laws, which cannot be broken without exciting a feeling of nervous disquietude, and even pain. Wrong notes are not more irritating to any one with an aptitude for music than a want of exactness in the rhythmic swing; a too long, or too short, step destroying the regularity of the march.

I am quite aware of all that has been, or may be, said about the supposed freedom from musical swing of what is called "plain-song," and (did time permit) I should be happy to show what are—or to me seem to be—the fallacies in some of the theories concerning it. But the most ardent advocate of "plain-song" will not question the truth of what I have asserted respecting what we all agree to call music; and will kindly bear with me if—in order to stick closely and usefully to one subject—I defer to some more suitable time any consideration of the possibility of "plain-song" being exempted from ordinary rhythmic conditions.

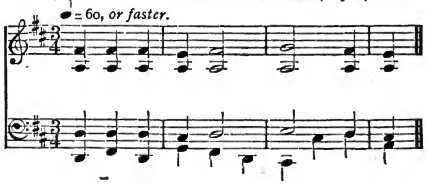
The pulses or steps in music may, within a tolerably wide limit, be quickened or retarded; but some definite time-relationship must be maintained, or a disagreeable and even positively torturing effect will result.

This pulsation agrees fairly with the steps of the various rates of movement which a good, healthy, robust walker would —in his different moods—naturally adopt. If walking slackens into a mere lazy saunter it tires more than would double the distance vigorously traversed. Every one has experienced the value of that decided rhythmic impetus which results from regularity of step. When walking quickens into a pace that seems to suggest running it fatigues; because the rate of movement is not in accordance with the character of the pulsation. For the difference between walking and running is one of kind, rather than of quickness, of movement. In walking each footfall is a distinct firm pulsation; but in running only the alternate steps have such a definite, marked, emphatic value.

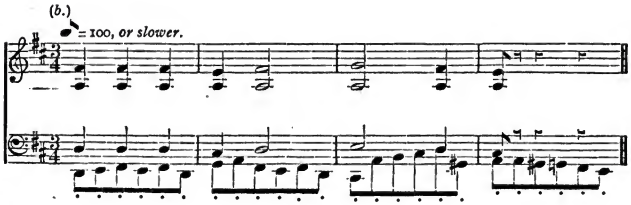
If we test the limits of a walking or marching pulsation—varying the movement between the excessive slowness that degenerates into an enfeebled, unequal step, without swing or decided impetus; and the hurried, fidgety, restless pace, which we naturally seek to relieve by breaking into a run that would be in better agreement with the rapidity of the footfall—we discover that with much fewer than sixty steps every minute we have (unless with the aid of some real or imagined intermediate pulsation) difficulty in measuring with certainty the regularity of the too slow march; and that with more than about a hundred and fifty paces each minute we get irritated and fatigued by the hurried accentuation of the movement.

In music like effects are experienced. With a medium rate of swing there is no difficulty in maintaining an exactness of measure: but, beyond a reasonable rate of pulsation, the mind divides steps that appear too long; and groups those that are too short and rapid. The exact limit of the power of registering the precision of pulsebeats will not be alike with different individuals; any more than the capacity of appreciating the pitch of extremely acute, or grave, sounds; or the perception of the niceties of minute shades of colour. But it may be roughly stated that the pulsation of music—like the steps in walking—ranges between 60 and 150 throbs (*a*) in a minute; and that, in a slower movement, the mind relieves itself from an uncomfortable watchfulness of the too long sounds by adopting (*b*) an intermediate gauge of regularity; and that, at a much faster speed (*c*) it calms itself by grouping the notes, and by measuring, or weighing, them in masses.

(*a.*) From BEETHOVEN's Sonata, Op. 2, No. 2.



(*b.*)



(a.) ♩ = 60, *or faster.* From BEETHOVEN's Sonata, Op. 2, No. 1.

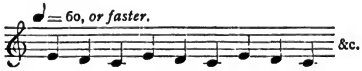
(b.) ♪ = 100, *or slower.*

(a.) ♩ = 60, *or faster.* From BEETHOVEN's Sonata, Op, 14, No. 2.

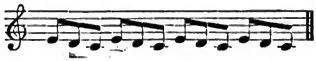
(b.) ♪ = 100, *or slower.*

(c.) ♩ = 80, *or faster.*

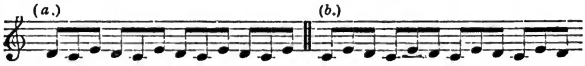
It cannot be necessary that I should speak of duple, or triple, division of pulses; or how they may be grouped under the leadership of a more emphatic throb; guided in that grouping by some peculiarity in the arrangement of the sounds of the melody, or of the chords. You must have noticed the influence of a *definite melodic direction* even in the chiming of bells, as well as in the playing of scales, &c. Three bells suffice to give a clearly rising or falling tune. Tolled at a slow pace each bell affords a distinct pulsethrob.



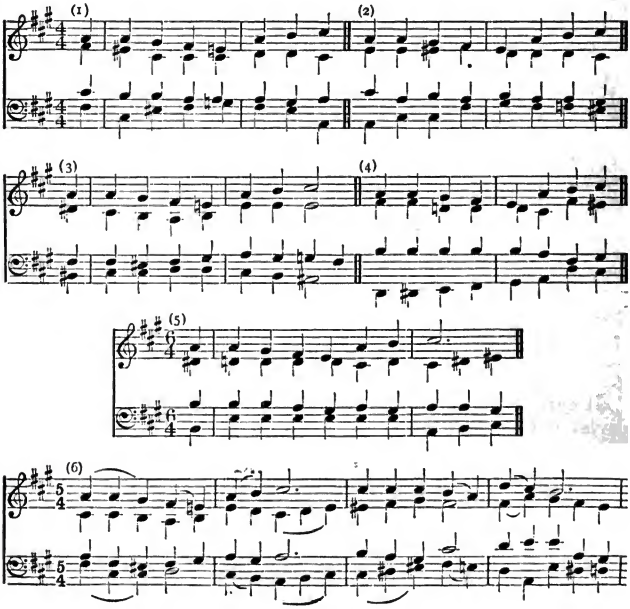
More quickly rung, the three sounds fall under the domination of an initiatory accentuation :—

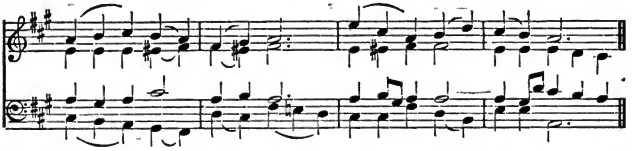


But the pertinacity with which our accentuation of the three sounds will always commence with the highest note, and the difficulty with which the mind can be made to fasten upon the middle (*a*), or even the lowest (*b*) note is very remarkable evidence of the influence of a definite direction of melody:

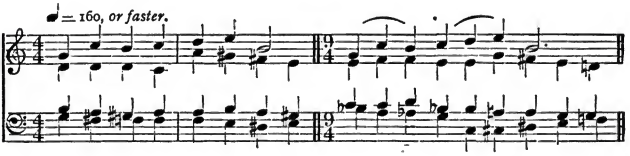


You must have noticed, also, the effect which *different harmonies* have in the determination of the rhythmic swing.





And you will be familiar with the difficulty with which any rapid change of cumbersome, and not very closely related, chords can be divested of a sort of hurried, fussy, agitated effect.



Of course the accentuation of music may be effected in various ways; with which you are, at least, as familiar as I am.

In emphatic, impassioned utterance, and in poetic measures, a regularity of pulsation is maintained by the oft-recurrence of emphasised syllables; and the speaker is greatly helped by the marked grip which he may, without offence, give to such syllables. But the separate syllables in music have no inherent, definite meaning, or fixed emphasis, apart from their length or position: and, just as it is not quite easy distinctly to articulate a long word having, between its accented, more than two unaccented syllables—such words as "literary," "itinerary"—so, in music, not more than three distinct pulses, or syllables, may be grouped together under the influence of one strong initiatory accent. There are, however, only two entirely satisfactory kinds of rhythmic swing—duple and triple: though, as you well know, these two kinds may be mixed in various manners.

But even the accented pulses are of varying force; and, like the simple throbs, may be grouped under the leadership of a stronger emphasis. The division of music into bars, by mapping it out in sections, not only enables the eye to fix more readily upon a particular note (just as the division of the great eleven-lined staff assists it to detect upon which line, or space, a character is placed) but marks where the graver of two, or the heaviest of three, accents falls.

It would save students much perplexity if musicians would uniformly carry out the mode of barring which they generally adopt; assigning two or three accents to each apparent mea-

sure. The present system has been contrived in order to simplify to the eye measures properly containing a too great number of notes to be easily, or quickly, read. The occasional excess of modern subdivision gives rise to many incongruities. For—just as, in old church song, with its minim pulses, when intermediate crotchets began to appear thickly, the cumbersome and confused-looking bars were halved, so—in quick modern music some authors have (with the like purpose of facilitating the quick deciphering of complicated-looking measures) divided their bars of four crotchets; while others have adopted the plan of using, as their pulse-notes, quavers; the grouping of which so readily and plainly shows the accents.

But rhythmic influence extends yet farther; the bars themselves being of unequal force. The same natural law of responsive action which (1) makes it difficult to create pulses of such force that their direct influence will for more than a second of time retard the setting in of pendular reaction, which (2) precludes the swing of an accented pulse extending over more than two succeeding rhythmic steps, and (3) prevents the force of a strong accent dominating more than two of the following weaker accents, reaches also (4) to consecutive bars, and renders them positive and negative.

The initiatory accent of the first full bar in a musical sentence has a greater force than the corresponding pulse in the following bar. Generally, two bars suffice to contain the whole cycle of strong accents, weaker accents, and non-accents. For—although music may be so contrived that (as in a triple rhythm, an accent is followed by two weaker pulses; and, in a bar, a strong accent may be followed by two weaker accents, so) a strong bar may be responded to by two weaker measures—still it is not easy to construct phrases of such powerful, decided, and lengthened swing that the influence of the first great accent will endure over, and entirely pervade and control, three whole measures. Such an extension always has a somewhat artificial character; and can be most readily effected by making the second bar a mere repetition, or sequential imitation, of the first; and thereby deceiving the ear, and rendering the second measure (so far as its thematic effect influences the matter) a starting point equally as good as the first.

In many old compositions bar-lines were much less frequent than they are in music of modern notation. Often only the full rhythmic cycles were barred: and, occasionally, even more extended passages were included in one measure. In some more modern works (as well as in the unaltered editions of old compositions) examples may be found of bars of complete rhythmic cycles; each measure having double the ordinary number of pulses. I may cite the airs in the "Messiah" "How beautiful," and "Behold! and see," the slow movement in

Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony, and the "Lacrymosa" in Mozart's *Requiem*, as familiar examples. While the juxtaposition, in Beethoven's *Sonata Pathétique*, of the bars of eight quaver-pulses in the introductory movement, and of the measures of only two minim-pulses in the succeeding *Allegro* affords an example of an eminently confusing diversity of notation.

I trust I have, thus far, carried with me your sympathies and assent. Indeed, I can claim the charm (or charge) of novelty for very little that I have yet advanced: and I have run some risk of wearying you by thus dwelling upon those rudimentary matters upon which rests the truth of all that I have yet to say.

I have described the rhythmic cycle of two, or occasionally three, bars as containing accents of all forces, and intermediate throbs of all weaknesses. But the impetus thus acquired does not cease with the termination of the cycle—which corresponds with one of the smaller sections of a literary sentence—but continues through such an added, balancing, cycle as serves to form an adequate response; and to complete a larger and more weighty section of a musical sentence, with a clearer, more comprehensive, and more developed meaning, marked off by a more decided punctuation.

Of those so-called "national" songs and melodies which have been handed down from generation to generation—in which no country is so rich as our own—as well as of all simple ballads and airs, one of the chief charms is that simplicity of rhythmic structure which commends them to all lovers of music, whether skilled, or unskilled, in the laws of the art. The first, and principal, portions of many of them are simple musical sentences of eight bars; with distinct semi-colon, or colon, division in the fourth measure; and a less formal (or comma) punctuation in the second and sixth bars.

But did I stay to explain the manifold ways of variously punctuating a musical sentence, I should be taking up your time unnecessarily and, perhaps, impertinently.

I pass on to consider whether the rudimentary principle of responsive pulsation—from which we have traced the growth of a simple sentence—will lead yet farther, even to the construction of those classical outlines of musical structure which the greatest masters have sought out and adopted. And evidently the same law which governs the balancing of an accented by a weaker pulse, of a positive by a negative bar, of an initiatory by a responsive cycle, leads to the addition to our eight-bar sentence of such a foil as will, by its subordinate interest, and in other ways, balance the pleasure of a return to the first and principal subject. In compositions of all kinds this chief positive theme, or text, directly or indirectly influences

the whole work. In its direct treatment it may be simply repeated, or be developed, embellished, reharmonised, and served up in many ways; but, throughout the movement it initiates, it forms the chief source of interest; and all other phrases, sentences, or themes should be so constructed that, by subordination, illustration, or contrast, they may impart a fresh charm to every reappearance of the principal text, and serve to enhance, and draw attention to, its beauties. Thus, by artistic "form" in musical (as in all other) composition we mean that subordination of all detail to a central, fundamental, governing idea, which prevents thoughts (individually beautiful) killing each other by irrelevancy, incongruity, or want of proportion. In the construction of that simplest of forms—a compact, inartificial sentence, with its responsive sentence, in the dominant, relative minor, relative major, or other near akin scale—it is of great importance that the concluding harmonies and progressions of the second part should lead to, and create an expectancy of the resumption of, the original key, and of the first sentence; so that the repetition of the leading idea may serve to mould the whole into one congruous, well-balanced composition.

The development of instrumental music from simple dance-tunes is so well understood that I need only just refer to its history as affording the clearest possible elucidation of the natural growth, outcome, and still binding influence of rhythmic principles, for which I am contending. Dance music is necessarily formed of precise, compact sentences, agreeing in rhythm and length with the motions and figures of the measures. When the continued alternation of a simple eight-bar sentence with its second (or negative) strain was found, by oft-repetition, to grow wearisome a third sentence afforded a little variety, and completed a trio of themes; two of them duly subordinated in importance to the principal text.

A desire for yet further relief naturally prompted the addition to the primary tune (with its second part, and *Da capo*) of an entirely similar form, complete in itself, contrasted in style to the original composition, and used alternately with it; forming a kind of longer second or intermediate part, or foil to the first structure.

Whether the term "Trio"—which is still applied to any secondary portion of a musical composition used alternately with the principal section—originally signified three subjects, or three instruments (as distinguished from four, employed in the other sentences) is, as you know, doubtful. But, as instrumentalists became expert, and composers ambitious, the strict formality of the dance measures (the minuet, jig, gavotte, &c.) was no longer allowed to curb the imagination; and a kind of "*Coda*," or appendix, was added to the first sentence on its last appearance; and was formed by the mere addition

of an extra rhythmic cycle, or of two cycles; the simplest preparation for such an elongation being to break away from, or interrupt, in the eighth bar, the expected perfect cadence; and then to repeat a rhythmically complete section of the sentence; concluding with the orthodox fundamental chords.

So a primitive simplicity of construction was maintained: the interest of the composition being derived entirely from the charm of the several sentences, from their mutual dependence and influence, from agreeable harmony (perhaps varied on the reappearance of the themes), and from the symmetry and compactness of the whole.

Evidently such a stereotyped precision could not satisfy the artistic aspirations of the great masters, to whom the growth of the orchestra (with its increasing power, contrast of tone, and physical capability) offered such vast, varied, and charming effects.

In the *Rondo* form they discovered a way of combining compactness of outline with some little development of subject; of preserving that balance of the various sections, which a study of rhythmic law had taught them to admire; and yet of heightening the attraction of the themes by embellishment, by analysing them, by toying with their more striking features, and in many fanciful ways.

In a *Rondo* (especially in the middle or "Trio" portion), clever workmanship and considerable power of expansion and development are required. As there is no pretence of being, in any sense, an accompaniment, or incitement, to any kind of pedal movement, a *Rondo* is free from any narrow restriction as to length of phrase or kind of rhythm. In the older *Rondos*, the power of expanding, and working out, a theme was very timidly displayed. In Haydn's movements of this class, the various sections are very distinctly marked, and precise.. Frequently the different sentences are divided by double bars. The more modern plan is to strive to hide the fragmentary formation of the movement, and to incorporate more thoroughly the sections in one sustained broad whole. The reintroduction—in the Coda, or winding up of the movement—of the theme of the middle (or "Trio") section, also serves to give compactness, consistency, and completeness to the work.

The yet more extended structural outline known as the *Sonata* form is also strictly divisible into three sections; the concluding portion of the earlier movements of the kind being —except so far as regards the transposition of the secondary subjects into nearer akin scales—entirely a repetition of the first part.

In the first section different themes are announced as texts for after-development. They should be contrasted in style, and yet have a certain relevancy and congruity of character.

The second (or "Trio") portion of the movement generally—not invariably—consists entirely of the fanciful development and working out of those subjects whose simple exposition occupied the first part. This portion is the chief test of the musicianlike qualifications of the author, as opposed to his mere power of producing melodic themes. It is the part of the movement which should bear evidence of thorough training, added to a fertile imaginative faculty. It would seem to be the latest contribution to musical architecture; for, in modern works, the expansion, and greater freedom and fancy of this heart of the *Sonata* form often surpasses the earlier efforts in the same direction, much as the navigation of to-day exceeds in boldness the timid hugging of the shore of primitive seamanship. Similarly, in vocal music, a fuller appreciation of rhythmic principles has led to free expansion of outline, and better balancing of sectional proportion. In Handel's larger songs, as in the older *Sonatas*, the drawbacks, to a modern ear, are the extreme brevity of the second part, and the consequent almost immediate repetition, without any change or added effect, of a long first part.

I have spoken of the first section of the *Sonata* structural outline as the *exposition* of subject matter for after use.

Need I call your attention for a moment to that form of work in which we constantly use the term "exposition"?

On a cursory examination it has been assumed that a *Fugue* is a kind of composition to be classed by itself, and chiefly regarded as the climax of contrapuntal effort.

It appears to me that no grosser mistake, no greater evidence of a defective power of analysis, could be made. For the first section of a sonata movement is an "exposition" of its themes in closely related keys; and the second part of a *fugue* is its "free *fantasia*," or fanciful and more modulatory working out, development, and mixture of subject matter. And, while there are numerous instances of the fugal treatment of the themes in the second division of movements avowedly in *Sonata* form, there are not wanting examples of the artistic use in a *fugue* of a second figure or subject, symphonically, rather than contrapuntally, treated. Mendelssohn's pianoforte *fugue* in E minor is an example known to all: and, in some degree, every *fugue* with a new counterpoint, introduced alone, toward the middle portion of the work affords an instance.

But as, perhaps, the brightest, most striking, and most modernly free in style, I would cite Bach's great *fugue* in E minor, on what is known as the wedge-like subject. In it I find one of the strongest possible evidences of the truth and binding power of what we call classical form, in that, with few theoretical dogmas as to the balance and proportion of the different sections of a movement, the *sonata* form was sub-

stantially adopted by the greatest *fugue* writer of all time; who, working with entirely different views and aims, achieved the compilation of a form perfect in itself according to the most modern notions, and, at the same time, full of a beauty of contrapuntal detail that remains not merely unsurpassed, but unequalled, by the cleverest part-writers of later days.

It is not necessary that I should speak of those irregular outlines entitled "fantasias," "impromptus," "caprices," &c. Such as admit of classification are—entirely to that extent—modifications and blendings of the plans already described, and it is certain that further experiments in similar directions will be made, and be more or less successful.

I noticed with much pleasure that Professor Macfarren (in his address to the Royal Academy students in September last) referred to the fact that many of Mendelssohn's "Lieder ohne Worte" are, however concise, perfectly symphonic in plan. An undeniable truth. But I regard the *lied* as a sort of spring, or early summer, growth—midway between the simple exhibition of the living expanding force of rhythmic pulsation in a musical sentence, and the full development of symphonic completeness, grace and beauty. For are not our two most ambitious forms—hurriedly sketched to day—mere extensions of that simple air of three—or, rather, two—sections, the plan of which was derived from the responsive character of pendular vibrations? The air, with its second sentence and *da capo*, grew into two airs, to be alternately used—as in the case of a minuet with its trio—the latter being a kind of enlarged second part, leading back to the original and principal theme, or predominant idea or text.

The beauties of a well-contrived musical composition are akin to those of a lecture, an essay, a poem. In each the author has a set purpose—apart from, and far higher than, the amusement of the listener, or reader—and ever seeks to cluster the sympathies of his audience round that text, or sentiment, or emotion, which forms the groundwork of his plan. Should he suffer himself to wander aimlessly, or be lured away by any "will-o'-the-wisp" fancy, or be unable to gather up the threads of his argument, and show their congruity and fitness, his work—be it *sonata*, sermon, or lecture—will be without form, and void of real, lasting, value.

You will pardon one or two suggestions which seem naturally to spring from our subject. The very gradual expansion of what we are sometimes apt to consider a perfected growth should inspire caution in condemning the attempts which (so long as our art is healthily studied) will continually be made still further to foster its progress; and, on the other hand, should supply us with some idea as to the direction in which legitimate, natural development must tend. Concentration of thought is of the greatest value in all

artistic work. But is it not possible to carry even simplicity of idea too far? Life is full of variety as well as of unity. In the study of its problems are we not often startled by a train of apparently unconnected thought suddenly throwing a new light upon, and revealing a hitherto hidden beauty in, our most familiar surroundings, imaginings and perplexities? By a judicious contrast of themes our greatest composers have produced some of their most powerful effects. Now-a-days the attempt is made to sustain, throughout a long work, the interest of the listener by the mere rhythmical alteration of one melodic outline: an endeavour that certainly shows the author's high ambition, and implicit confidence in his constructive power. But may not the excessive use of what may be called personal, or representative, themes (however highly we may admire the ingenuity with which they are interwoven) betray a somewhat restricted capacity for melodic invention? (Hear, hear!) Again, there was no great difficulty in giving necessary variety to a set of short dance tunes, including four, or more, movements. It does not follow that four or more symphonic developments may not often produce something like a surfeit of music of one style. We are familiar with classical compositions of five, six, or even more, long movements. I am not ashamed to own that in listening to them I generally feel that I could, without repining, dispense with some of the sections, and many of the repetitions; beautiful as the individual ideas may be. (Hear, hear!) And I venture to suggest that even a notion as to an advisable number (as well as form) of movements is derivable from our rhythmical inquiries; and that a *sonata* or symphony would gain (rather than lose) by the excision of one of the customary four movements. I appeal to your experience whether the difficulty of constructing an entirely satisfactory *finale* has always been altogether overcome, even by the great masters; and whether that difficulty does not largely depend upon the fact that the movement has to be lively, and yet, probably, has immediately to follow another brisk section. Do not the abandonment of the minuet (the last relic of the old dance tunes) and the extension of its substitute into a true symphonic movement, point to the elaboration of this section as the fitting termination of the work, and as the proper complement of the whole rhythmical plan—the symphony having its three movements as each section has its three divisions, and as the air (from the model of which it sprang) had its three sentences?

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN.—I hope we shall not have listened to this admirable paper without its eliciting some remarks from the many able gentlemen I see around me. There is a gentleman present who has written a most admirable work on the subject of fugue, and I trust he will not be silent: but I must ask you to be brief, because there is an interesting exhibition to be made afterwards.

Mr. J. C. WARD.—I may remark that in those illustrations Dr. Hiles gave us of the Old Hundredth Psalm I failed to follow him in the going out of the regular four beats in the bar. In each case with me the accent came on the second note.

Professor MONK.—I may be permitted to say, with regard to this most excellent paper, that it is a striking example of the pleasure and advantage of such societies as our own, that we are able to hear from time to time such papers as have been presented to us on this subject by our Chairman himself, and by Mr. Bannister; and, again, by Dr. Hiles. Although the subject matter may be said to be in its nature trite and known to us all, how much we learn from the successive papers thus presented to us, and how refreshing and interesting this paper of Dr. Hiles is to us, even after our recollection of what has been so ably said before. It also strikes me that in calling on any audience to "continue the discussion" on these subjects, it is almost impossible to succeed. I appeal to you as to whether the paper, to which we have just listened with such pleasure, is not studied and elaborated to an extent which makes it impossible to continue the discussion of the subject, unless in a fragmentary manner, in which a few speakers may make what Dr. Hiles called "a grip" at some isolated observation, and so present either their assent or dissent. It is impossible to offer anything in discussion on such a subject as this at so short notice; we can only hope to make better use of such papers when they come to us in our printed proceedings. The remarks with which Dr. Hiles concluded are extremely interesting just at this time when many, no doubt, have been listening to the newest development of great music with feelings springing first of all from our reverence and love of the old art-form which Dr. Hiles so ably enunciates and explains, and yet, let us hope, with every disposition to enjoy a new departure in art. We cannot sufficiently thank those who have undertaken to present to us such an enormous work as the "Ring des Nibelungen," and while we come away with very varied impressions, I think we shall always come to a striking agreement, that we learn

much, and receive from each composition a new start in artistic enjoyment and anticipation.

Mr. JAMES HIGGS.—I trust I may be allowed personally to express my individual thanks to Dr. Hiles for the extremely valuable paper he has read to us. I have been very much instructed, and I feel deeply obliged to Dr. Hiles for what he has said. One thought occurred to me in the earlier part of the paper, when he was speaking of the comparatively narrow limits within which appreciable pulsation can move. What relation does musical pulsation bear to the natural pulsation that is going on within each of us; and what effect has individual temperament on the interpretation of music? Because it seems to me that if a man whose pulse beats slowly attempts to play rapidly he is more outraging his natural instincts than is the case with the man who is of a more excitable temperament. It is more easy for the latter to play fast, and he *desires* to play more rapidly. Then, again, it occurred to me how very useful a knowledge of the biography, character and habits of composers must be, and how such knowledge must help to the proper appreciation and interpretation of their music, when we are able to some extent to think as they thought.

The CHAIRMAN.—As no one else seems disposed to say anything, I will conclude with a few words. I am very pleased to find that Dr. Hiles, while essentially a conservative —as I frankly avow myself to be in musical matters—not only would wish to steer a safe and middle course, but would altogether repudiate the idea which the admirers of the modern school wish to force upon us, that we must look with disapprobation on the works of the old composers, who have made us what we are. The works of Wagner, I must confess, from the opportunities which have been recently afforded me, have brought me a considerable amount of delight, although the tenets of that unquestionable genius are not altogether in accordance with the views of art which I hold to be the true ones. But, nevertheless, I say that so long as we are not called upon to look down on that which we have loved and revered of the great masters, we can afford to appreciate that which is beautiful in Wagner or any other composer. Another point we must commend Dr. Hiles for is speaking about the error, on which he has touched more fully in his published works, of teaching music, especially counterpoint, with reference to a bygone period of the art. It appears to me that one of the most serious mistakes that are committed in the teaching of our art—counterpoint especially—is that we should forbid things because they were forbidden in bygone days, but which, nevertheless, are perfectly good and perfectly true in art. I call to mind a remarkable instance of that triple grouping of bars of which Dr. Hiles spoke, in which, although the bar-line seems to indicate an equal emphasis, yet the first

of each three bars in succession has the prior emphasis and the prior position in mental appreciation as a rhythmical pulse, namely, the great Scherzo in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, where, if you recollect, the author himself has indicated, in order to prevent any confusion, *ritmo de tre battute.* That appears to me a very strong corroboration of the remarks so ably brought before us by Dr. Hiles. I will only say one word with regard to the number of movements in a symphony. When an author attempts to write a symphony, I do not see why he should compel himself to write four movements if he has only material for three; nor do I see why, like Rubinstein in his Ocean Symphony, he should go on year after year adding two movements to a work which originally contained six or seven. I hear that the Ocean Symphony now occupies about two-and-a-half hours in performance. I must corroborate what Dr. Hiles says, that sometimes the final movements of some of Mozart's sonatas have less interest than the rest. It seems as if it were merely necessary to end with something, and he seems to have bestowed less care upon it, and it has less of the high, exalted character of the previous movements. Therefore, I must confess, after having acknowledged myself a conservative, and a very humble worshipper at the feet of such a man as Mozart, that sometimes his last movements, especially of his sonatas, do seem to me as being not altogether equal to the rest of the work; and I think, with Dr. Hiles, that if we could end with a scherzo that should please us, on no occasion should we add another movement. I can mention one instance: the first pianoforte Concerto of Sterndale Bennett, the last movement of which he originally intended to be succeeded by a finale; yet that scherzo in 3-4 time makes a most satisfactory conclusion and climax to his admirable work. I will now ask Dr. Hiles if he has anything to say in reply.

Dr. Hiles.—I have very little to say, because your remarks have been of such a very undeservedly eulogistic kind that I have nothing to explain, although Mr. Ward mentioned, with regard to the four beats in the bar, he was not quite convinced about the alteration in the accent. That may have been my fault: but I think we shall agree that, although I may not have succeeded in making such alteration, it is possible. You will remember that I said that, if I wished to treat the subject at all unfairly, I should rather prefer to give you a new melody, in which you had no preconceived notion how the accent should fall. In treating a melody with which you are so familiar it would be almost impossible to drive you away from your accustomed reading. Still, I think the fact remains that the thing can be done. I have been much pleased with the remarks you have made, Mr. Chairman: they lead me to ask you what it is that Wagner does strive at principally. I was listening on

Saturday to the opera "Die Meistersinger," and it seemed to me that he was greatest when he was symphonic; and that, in fact, his highest aim was to be symphonic, and to treat the vocal part as a very subordinate, and immaterial, matter. There was a constant undercurrent of the orchestra going on with a development of an idea—it may not have been exactly our idea of symphonic treatment, but still it was the development of an idea. (I wish to speak with all possible deference and modesty; because no one can be more perfectly convinced than I am that Wagner is a very great man indeed: but the very greatest man may make mistakes; and I think it behoves us to be cautious against being led away by the fashionable worship of the day, which will pass off, and then people will ask what it was that we all lost our heads about.) But it occurred to me on Saturday, that this symphonic treatment of his goes on continually as an undercurrent, very cleverly done, but a little wearisome, because following Schumann's plan too closely. One of the peculiarities of Schumann was the want of perfect cadence; as if he felt it was rather schoolboyish to complete an eight-bar phrase: and so you get an unlooked-for chord where you expect to come to a state of rest. It seems to me that Wagner carries that to an excess: and that if one of the great masters could come back, or if we could have another great master (of which there does not seem any prospect at present), he would, in an infinitely more interesting manner, preserve the continuity of the symphonic form. If he chose to follow the same lines, and treat the voice in the same way, he would give us a much more beautiful undercurrent of instrumentation; and the voice would come in with more accord or relevance. With regard to what Mr. Higgs so ably said in respect to our knowing something of the character of a man before we could understand his music, it struck me that you may judge Mendelssohn's character very fairly by his music. Cannot you judge of the restless spirit which killed him ultimately? Did you ever hear his music played much too fast? You must not take Mendelssohn's music slowly—it damages it more than any music I know. (Hear.) It seems to me to give you at once the man. I mean that, with all his amiability and geniality, he was a restless man; and it was his restless spirit that killed him. Sterndale Bennett has been mentioned; and, although it has nothing at all to do with the subject which has been discussed, I will just ask whether we do not owe another lesson to Sterndale Bennett —which, as far as I know, has never been acknowledged—to his knowledge of orchestration, which was not generally considered one of his great qualifications. It happened to be my duty not long ago to look over an exercise which had been returned from one of the universities—I will not say which—

and one of the examiners had pointed out as a fault that the flutes were occasionally used beneath the oboes. Does not Sterndale Bennett do that frequently in many of his works? and has it never occurred to us that the beauty of the flute is in the lower part of the instrument, not in a feeble tootling up above; but in the thickness of tone which it gives in the lower octave?

The CHAIRMAN.—All that now remains for us is to thank Dr. Hiles for his most admirable paper.

The vote of thanks was carried unanimously.

ON VARIOUS ATTEMPTS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE TO RECORD EXTEMPORANEOUS PLAYING.

By T. L. Southgate, Esq.

Most of the members of this Association are doubtless aware that from time to time efforts have been made to obtain a permanent record of music played extemporaneously. A little consideration of some of the conditions attached to our art will show the desirability of successfully achieving such an aim. Before this assembly there is no need to dilate on the fact that the trained composer is just as able—so to speak—to hear with his eyes, as ordinary people are to understand the import of words from silently reading them. The musician composes, or should at least write down his ideas, at the desk; indeed, in the case of orchestral or elaborate polyphonic music, no other course is practicable. This is the sound and proper method; and so long as intelligible "form" rather than disconnected rambling is recognised as an indispensable necessity on which to build, so long will the trained composer prefer the comparative slowness of writing at his desk, to dashing off his, perhaps cruder, ideas when sitting at his instrument. But having admitted the advantage of this mode of proceeding, we must not forget that there is also another side of music-art that ought not to be overlooked, and that is extemporaneous playing. I need not waste your time by dwelling on the various grades of this feature. Such extemporaneous playing as consists of fearful and wonderful chords, more or less vague, coming from nowhere in particular, and leading to the same place, that one too frequently hears doing duty as an in voluntary in our churches, or the astonishing preludising of youthful scramblers on the pianoforte, cannot too soon be forgotten. But above and far beyond these immature essays is the playing of true artists, whom nature has richly endowed with the faculty that we term inspiration. How often has one heard said by those who have been moved by such performances: "What a pity it is that such fine music should be lost!" The names of many of those gifted beings who have shone in this branch of music are known, and some of us can even recall the impressions of delight with which we heard them play, but the music itself is lost. Happily, most of the great improvisors have also been composers, and have left on their written works the impress of their genius. Still, we should have liked to possess some record of the music they

gave forth when the spirit moved them, and the listeners heard with outward ears the most inward thoughts of such musicians. We have numbered among our own countrymen great players of this type—amongst others the names of Roseingrave, Crotch, the two Wesleys, Sterndale Bennett, and Henry Smart must recur to the memory of us all. Nor is the race extinct; we still possess, I am glad to say, musicians whose extemporaneous performances are marked by good taste, rich fancy, and sound musicianship. Many such artists play much, perhaps, but write little. The inexorable round of daily duties, the incessant occupation of teaching, the want of quiet leisure, are often (and truthfully) pleaded as some of the excuses for not publishing more. To such musicians an apparatus that would set down, what one may term, their fleeting thoughts when they have anything worth saying, would be an unquestionable boon. Moreover, it is worthy of consideration that, like as the orator is more fervid and eloquent than the slower literary writer, so the performing musician is frequently more impassioned, and has what the Germans term more *Geist*, when engaged in the exposition of his art, than when seated slowly setting down his ideas at the desk. We all know that happy thoughts and graceful modes of expression too often escape one before they can be got upon paper. Thought is frequently so momentary that it is gone before we can arrest it; indeed, it is popularly said that these lost thoughts are often the best.

To digress a moment. The late well-known critic, H. F. Chorley, in his "Modern German Music," writes thus of Hummel's impromptu playing, which he heard when on a visit to Weimar in 1840: "By none who have heard Hummel's improvisation can it ever be forgotten. It was graceful, spontaneous, fantastic. The admirable self-control of his style as a player (displayed in a measurement and management of *tempo* unequalled by any contemporary or successor that I have heard), so far from leading him to hamper his fancy or humour, enabled him to give both the fullest scope, inasmuch as he felt sure that he could never ramble away into a chaos, under pretext of a flight across dreamland. The subjects he originated in improvisation were the freshest, brightest, most various conceivable: his treatment of them could be either strict or freakish, as the moment pleased;—or he would take the commonest tune and so grace and enhance and alter it, as to present it in the liveliest forms of a new pleasure. I remember once to have heard Hummel thus treat the popular airs in Auber's 'Masaniello' for an hour and a half, throwing off a Neapolitan fantasia with a felicity in which his unimpeachable beauty of tone and execution were animated by the bright beauty of the south, as he wrought together the Chapel Hymn and the Fishermen's Chorus and the Tarantella, and Masaniello's air by the side of the sleeping Fenella." Referring to the affected depreciation of this great composer—

a composer, I may remark, whose misfortune it was to have lived at the same time, and so to have been overshadowed by the still greater genius of Beethoven — Chorley continues: "It is well known that the gift of musical improvisation can be cultivated so far as readiness, order, and even climax are concerned; that the fancy, too, can be set free by exercise; but it is hard to conceive that he, who was the most various and the most masterly of modern *improvisatori*, should have been a mere machine into which so much learning had been crammed: and thus it is with regret that I have always fancied him undervalued and disparaged among those very persons of taste and philosophy whose boast it was to penetrate through forms and incrustations to the innermost heart of Nature."

I think it will be conceded that any mode of permanently recording happy, but fleeting, impressions will certainly prove welcome and, let us hope, useful. Such a result will at least save time, and in this busy age this alone will be of value. Far too much good paper is already spoilt by being used for the supply of what is termed "new music." I hardly think that a "note writer-down" will materially increase this supply. Although a dilettante may use such an apparatus to give to the world his prized ideas, cherished thoughts, or vague ramblings, the instrument must exist chiefly for the true artist whose merits cultured people have already assessed and recognised.

As my main object is to direct attention to the apparatus kindly sent here by Mr. Wallis, of 135, Euston Road, for your inspection, I will detain you but a short time over the historical account of pieces of mechanism of this character.

A clergyman of the name of Creed appears to have been one of the first to think of constructing a "Melograph." In the year 1747, he sent a communication to the Society of Arts demonstrating "the possibility of making a machine that will write down extempore voluntaries or other pieces of music as fast as any master shall be able to play them on the harpsichord." There is no record, however, of any such machine having been made according to his proposal. It is said that some such apparatus was constructed in 1770, by a monk named Engramelle, but there are no particulars known of this. In 1774, John Frederick Unger, burgomaster of Einbec, suggested a machine for this purpose, and made some designs for it, which obtained the approval of the Academy of Sciences at Berlin. A description of this scheme was subsequently printed, with copperplate illustrations, at Brunswick. The first to make a practicable machine was a German named Hohlfield. The invention is mentioned by Burney in his volume of Travels; it consisted of two cylinders, moving paper between them, on which, by means of a crayon, each key when pressed down by the player caused a mark to be made. The apparatus had obviously many defects, but the Berlin Academy rewarded

the inventor with a handsome gratuity. In 1827, M. Carreyre exhibited before the Fine Arts Committee of the French Institute a melographic piano, which consisted of a clockwork movement unwinding from one cylinder to another a thin plate of lead, on which were impressed by the action of the keys certain peculiar signs, which required to be translated into ordinary notation by means of an explanatory table. Although a commission was appointed to report on this matter, no report seems to have been presented, and the machine was evidently not a success. A M. Boudouin afterwards read before the same body a paper concerning another piano of this kind, but nothing is known of his scheme. In 1836 an Englishman, Berry, took out a patent for an apparatus of this character. It consisted of a revolving cylinder carrying paper, which was marked by pencils depressed by the pianoforte keys. As an alternative for the lead pencils, he proposed metal points, which caused the paper to be marked through pressing black carbonised paper against it. This patent is a little important, as it shows the first attempt made to indicate the length of the bars. The inventor suggested that this could be accomplished by beating regular time on a foot pedal: mechanism connected with this punctured the moving paper, thus dividing it into definite spaces. The patent contains a description of elaborate arrangements for deciphering and transcribing this sort of musical shorthand. There appear to have been a good many pedals, cranks, and other appliances connected with the machine, and altogether I am doubtful as to whether it was workable. In 1856, I. Merzolo, an Italian, took out a provisional patent for an apparatus to give an "identical reprint or repetition with types like those used in ordinary printing." The specification is very brief, and though one drawing is given with it, the whole thing is so vague and hazy that it conveys no definite information as to how the object set forth could possibly have been accomplished. So far as I am aware, no further serious attempt was made in this direction until the year 1863, when a Mr. F. Beverley Fenby, of Worcester, took out a patent for such an apparatus, which he termed "The Electro-Magnetic Phonograph," employing (as you may remark) the same word Edison used some sixteen years later for his ingenious piece of mechanism for audibly reproducing sounds. An Englishman was thus the first to employ electricity for the purpose of recording music. Fenby's instrument was of the most elaborate nature, its main principle was that which governs all telegraph machinery: viz., the making a soft piece of iron into a temporary magnet, and thus, by the motion obtained, causing a small inked wheel to be pressed against a band of moving paper. The specimen of the music printed, attached to the copy of the patent, to a certain extent resembles that which Herr Föhr's apparatus produces. I have not been able to find out whether this machine was ever constructed. According

to the description furnished, it was so complicated, that I doubt very much whether it could have successfully carried out all the operations that its inventor therein set forth; its cost must necessarily have been considerable. In the year 1864, M. F. J. Endres applied for a patent for an invention of this kind, but for some reason this was refused to him. His plan seems to have been to have as many type-wheels as there were pianoforte-keys, kept revolving; on the periphery of these wheels there were cut notes of various values, from a semibreve down to a demi-semiquaver. Upon the finger rising from a note struck, the intention was that the revolving wheel in connection with this should print on a band of paper a note of the exact time value of the sound played. The intention was good, but a careful examination of the mechanism proposed shows that it could not possibly accomplish this aim. I should imagine that the inventor could have been but imperfectly acquainted with musical requirements, for he arranged that pedals or sliders were to be used each time an accidental was to be played. Like many other so-called inventions on the files of the Patent Office, Endres' scheme was a mere chimera, and quite unworkable.

The idea of a series of pencils depressed by the action of the keys upon a band of paper is one that must obviously occur to any person thinking for a moment on this subject; consequently it has been suggested in various forms by would-be inventors again and again. One cannot be surprised at this; but that they should rush to the Patent Office to obtain official protection for their very original idea is certainly a little surprising. And I cannot but say that it is not to the credit of that antiquated department of our govermental system that it should so readily take the fees and grant patents for schemes that lack novelty, practicability, and usefulness. I say this much, because there are no fresh ideas in the patents obtained by Schwetz, a German, in 1879; Hoyer in 1880; and Groth, a Swede, in the same year. With slightly different modifications all these persons suggest, what may be briefly termed, the pencil arrangement; apparently the lead of these pencils is never likely to become worn away and exhausted, for no mode is provided for keeping them fit for the work required of them.

In the journal *La Lumière Electrique* is an account of an apparatus which was shown at the Paris Electrical Exhibition of last year. The inventor, M. J. Carpentier, terms it "Le Mélographie Répétiteur," and it was exhibited attached to a small harmonium. Its enthusiastic designer, evidently having the perforated cards of the Jacquard loom in his vision, states that it writes down ordinary music played on the keyboard "*dans le langage de Jacquard*," and then reproduces it as often as may be desired on the instrument again. The process is effected by means of electro-magnets in con-

nection with the keys, putting into action a series of cutters which cut slits in a band of moving paper, the slits corresponding to the length and position of the notes. By an after arrangement, the perforated paper subsequently allows the wind to pass through its slits, and thus reproduces the music previously played. M. Carpentier states that he intends to make the machine print in ordinary characters that which the improvisor has played, but he considerately warns the reader that this is at present only a project. I may just stay to point out that this is an impossibility, such an operation requiring that which no machine can ever possess: viz., a brain, and power of varied and independent thought.

In April, 1880, Mr. H. J. Dickinson took out a patent for an apparatus of this nature. I am unable to say whether his proposal has been carried out, or to describe the machine; but, from the meagre account given of it in the specification, its principle seems to have been similiar to that of the Casselli electro-chemical telegraph, and therefore it is analogous to Herr Föhr's apparatus. A Mr. Thwaite, an organist at Bolton, in a letter to the Editor of the journal *Engineering* in December last, states that some years ago he devised a melograph. Its principle was to press needles against a revolving drum covered with transfer paper; the paper being punctured by this operation. I think that the success of a machine so constructed would be very doubtful.

There also was patented last year, by M. A. P. Hodgson, of Paris a very elaborate "Apparatus for correctly transcribing musical compositions." The patent is numbered 573; it is difficult to understand, the translation from the French being imperfectly done. The inventor, who styles his instrument the "Pianograph Metronome," says that in all previous apparatuses "the infinite variations of the unity of movement was overlooked." This in plain English means, that the time was not indicated; and he goes on to say that "since the application of Messrs. Winkel and Maëlzel's chronometer to music this has become possible." There is no need to waste time by describing in detail this complicated piece of mechanism. The extraordinary table given, "showing the variation of the unity of duration" and the algebraical description of the vibration of a pendulum, may possibly interest mathematicians, but they are of no practical use to musicians. The odd direction that "the composer should end his composition by a perfect chord in the key of F, and not by the tonic, a third, or a fifth," is quite enough to show that the inventor of this apparatus must have a very limited and imperfect notion of the nature of extemporaneous music. Briefly I may say, that the machine prints with ordinary ink on a band of paper, lines representing in their length the duration of the notes held down. The metronome governs the rate of motion the driving cylinder revolves at, and it is

thus supposed, to regulate the time. I say supposed, because, in the first place, one hardly ever plays in absolutely accurate time, and so, an unyielding clockwork arrangement would certainly not synchronise with a person's playing as to the precise bar divisions; secondly, because by such an arrangement no provision could be made for indicating *accelerandos*, *ritardandos*, or any form of *tempo rubato*. M. Hodgson's complex mechanism, with all its pretension, accomplishes very little.

We now come to the "Music Electrograph" before you. I happened to pass through Stuttgard last year, and saw the apparatus at a small, but very excellent exhibition which was open at that time in the Wurtemburg capital. A notice which I wrote of the invention appeared in the *Musical Standard* of last November, and, in consequence of the attention the matter obtained, Herr J. Föhr brought one of his machines over here, and has since sold the English patent. This gentleman, I may mention, is not a musician, but is the secretary of the Telegraphic Administration of Stuttgard. The mechanism of this *Electro-chemischer Notenschreib-apparat*, as he terms it, is so simple that but a few words are necessary in order to describe it. Shortly, I may say that there are a series of contact buttons, running through a long rail or register placed over the back part of the pianoforte keys; these buttons, by means of insulated wires, are in connection with platinum styles or points which press on a band of paper, stored on a drum, and is unwound by means of clockwork. The paper as it passes through the machine is saturated with a chemical solution of ferrocyanide of potassium, sulphuric acid and water; it is afterwards ruled, by means of an inking roller, with the usual lines of the staves, and some dotted ledger lines above and below. On a pianoforte key or keys being depressed, what electricians term a circuit is completed, and the current runs from a Leclanché battery, passing through the saturated paper by the particular style or styles in connection with the keys struck, and staining it a bluish colour; this is owing to the electric current decomposing the salt with which the paper is charged. The length of the stain depends on the precise time that the pianoforte key is held down; a semibreve, for instance, appearing as a long streak, while a quaver would be but a dash, and a demisemiquaver a mere dot. The blank spaces on the paper represent the periods of silence, viz., the rests; thus, marks are formed by the current, and rests are indicated by its absence. In the apparatus I first saw, Herr Föhr distinguished the sharps and flats—or to be more correct, the black keys of the pianoforte—by red stains, the white keys appearing with blue stains. He obtained this result by using styles of different metals, but though the plan certainly possessed a pictorial advantage, it presented certain disadvantages which induced him to prefer the employment of one colour only, distinguishing the stains

representing the white notes by making them twice as broad as those standing for the black notes. Thus, ▬▬ indicates a white key-note, and ▬ a black one. There is no great difficulty in translating this species of musical shorthand; with a little patience and intelligence it can readily be done, either by the composer or his amanuensis. I suggested to the inventor a method of marking the bar-lines, which has been adopted in the instrument before you. It consists of a pedal in electric connection with two platinum styles placed at the extreme top and bottom of the stave. On depressing this with the foot, as in the ordinary mode of beating time, the place of the first (or indeed any) beat of the bar is indicated by lines stained at the moment of depression on both sides of the stave.

It will thus be perceived that Herr Föhr's apparatus is very simple in design. There are no magnets or delicate mechanism employed; it is worked upon much the same plan as that of the electro-chemical telegraphs of Bain, Gintl, Bakewell, Casselli and Bonelli. The apparatus comes under the denomination of one of those time and labour saving mechanical arrangements, of which we have so many examples in this busy age. I cannot but think that it will take rank as an unerring and economical means of aiding our music composers, either when extemporising, or on playing over any previously thought-out piece.

Note.—Since the above paper was read, I have been informed that Herr Föhr's apparatus has, to a considerable extent, been anticipated by another inventor. In 1870, M. Alexandre Amédée Rossignol obtained provisional protection for an "Apparatus for tracing music," the complete patent being sealed in October, 1872. The invention consisted of an arrangement by which, on a band of chemically saturated paper, stains corresponding to the length of the notes played were made by an electric current passed through the moving paper. By means of using some styles or points made of iron, and some of brass, two colours were obtained—viz., red and blue, severally representing the black and white keys of the instrument. The inventor marked the position of the bar lines by providing that the performer's foot should beat time on a pedal, and so causing the electric current to stain indicating dots on the music stave. There was a bell attached to this apparatus giving notice if anything went wrong. I am not aware whether one of these machines has been made. Though rather more complicated than that of Föhr's, its principle is certainly the same. As it is stated that Herr Föhr conceived the design of his apparatus several years ago, since which he has been working it out, the question as to priority of invention is uncertain.

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